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MONDRIAN

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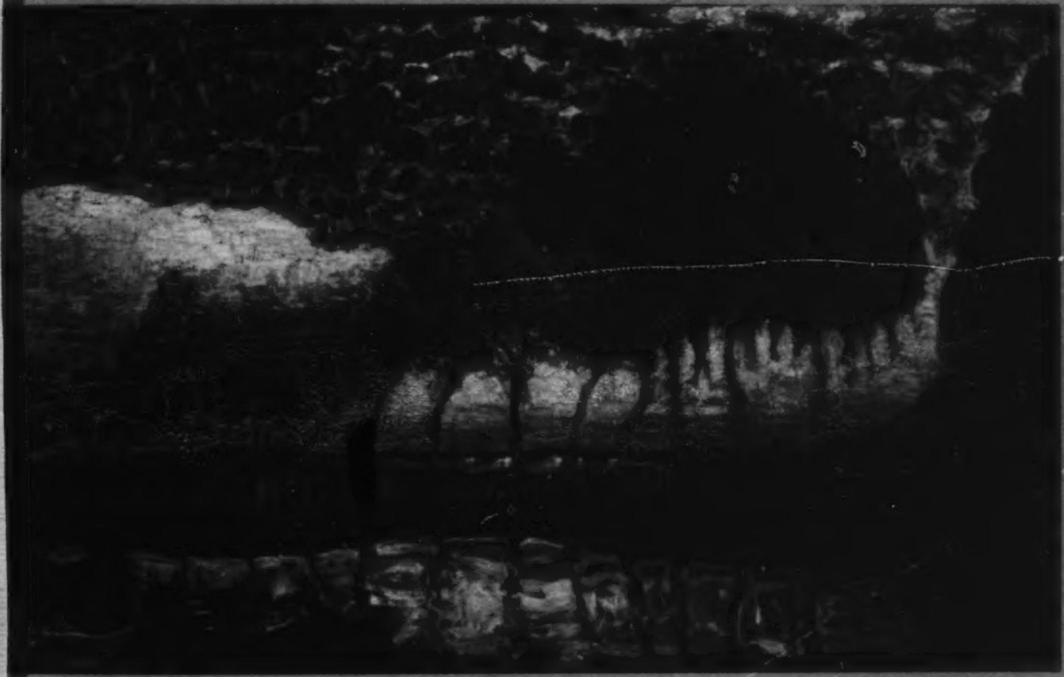

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TORONTO: ART GALLERY

PIET MONDRIAN

1872-1944

catalogue by **Robert P. Welsh**

The Art Gallery of Toronto
February 12 — March 20, 1966

Philadelphia Museum of Art
April 8 — May 9, 1966

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague
June 15 — August 7, 1966

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Preface

Although artists and scholars have for many years appreciated Piet Mondrian's greatness as a pioneer of geometric abstraction, it is only very recently that his early periods have been considered without prejudice. It is now possible to see clearly the continuity of his total development.

In this retrospective exhibition the Art Gallery of Toronto has attempted to present the most fully documented survey of Mondrian's stylistic development yet undertaken. The exhibited works have been selected to illuminate important aspects of Mondian's evolution from a naturalistic to an abstract style. Wherever possible, emphasis has been placed on previously unexhibited or uncatalogued works. A particular effort has been made to date the paintings accurately and to provide supplementary factual material which will correct misconceptions about Mondrian's relation to the various art movements with which he came in contact. The exhibition will show that Mondrian maintained a strong independence in the course of developing his later unique style.

Our contemporary environment has been much influenced by the *De Stijl* group with which Mondrian was affiliated for almost ten years. The areas most dramatically and obviously affected have been architecture, advertising art, industrial design, typography, interior decoration and furniture design. The forms of contemporary objects of everday use have been influenced by Mondrians's principles of compositional structure (the asymmetrical balance of forces reduced to the essential vertical-horizontal duality), which are so evident in his abstract paintings and are clearly stated in his writings.

Mondrian foresaw a number of cultural developments which are only now becoming manifest. He predicted the collapse of Art in its nineteenth-century connotation of social or intellectual distinction, and called for the creation of a new visual environment compatible with the democratic *Zeitgeist* of the twentieth century. Mondrian's intellectual beliefs were a determining factor in his life and his art. The final move to New York in 1940 was a logical climax to his career, for he saw that metropolis as uniquely expressing abstract living converted into concrete form.

Today Mondrian's position as a pioneer of modern painting is assured. His contribution has been three-fold: first, the influence on other artists of his principles of pictorial structure; secondly, the influence of his simplified rectilinear compositions, through the *De Stijl* movement, on our visual environment; finally, the influence of his firm conviction that art must have a spiritual impact on life.

The Art Gallery of Toronto is pleased and honoured to share the *Piet Mondrian* exhibition with the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague. We are grateful to the directors of these distinguished museums for their enthusiastic support and cooperation. Dr Evan H. Turner has made available to us both the Mondrian works and the facilities of a major American museum. Drs L. J. F. Wijsenbeek has been most generous in providing many irreplaceable works, especially from the transitional period, from the Gemeentemuseum's large collection of Mondrian paintings.

We wish to thank our adviser for this exhibition, Robert P. Welsh, Assistant Professor of Fine Art at the University of Toronto, who has not only selected the works to be exhibited and prepared the catalogue, but has also assisted in obtaining loans. We are very grateful for the support of The Canada Council, which provided a grant towards the publication of the catalogue.

Our greatest debt of gratitude is surely to the lenders, and we greatly appreciate their sacrifice. This exhibition, because of the extended loan period, has demanded uncommon generosity on their part.

WILLIAM J. WITHROW *Director, The Art Gallery of Toronto*

Acknowledgements

In an exhibition of this size it is almost impossible to thank everyone, both in Europe and in North America, who has helped to make it an accomplished fact.

My first thanks go to the lenders, who frequently also provided valuable information about the works in their collections. I am especially grateful to two personal friends of Mondrian, Messrs A. P. van den Briel and S. B. Slijper, who not only put their great storehouse of information at my disposal, but also permitted us to borrow several important works. Mr and Mrs James H. Clark, Mr Harry Holtzman, and Mr Sidney Janis have added greatly to this exhibition by making available sizeable segments of their Mondrian collections. Through the cooperation and kindness of Mr and Mrs Burton Tremaine, and the generosity of Alfred H. Barr Jr., Director of Museum Collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and of Mr Janis, it has been made possible for two of the three major paintings from Mondrian's New York period, *Broadway Boogie Woogie* and *New York City I*, to be seen together outside New York for the first time in recent years.

I am indebted to R. W. D. Oxenaar of the State Museum Krœller-Müller, Otterlo, John Leering of the Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, E. de Wilde of the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, and James Johnson Sweeney of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, for their cooperation and effort to make works not ordinarily lent available for this exhibition. Carla Esser, Judith Rothschild-Meyer, Toos van Seventer, Sybille Pantazzi, Harold Diamond and Jon Streep have provided valuable information for the catalogue. Professor J. G. van Gelder, Kunsthistorisch Instituut, Utrecht, Joop Joosten, Head of the Modern Section of the National Bureau for Art-historical Documentation in The Hague, L. J. F. Wijsenbeek, Director, and Cornelis Blok, former Assistant Curator, of the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague, have provided personal aid and encouragement as well as making available the rich facilities of their respective institutions.

I owe much to Robert Rosenblum, Professor of the History of Art at Princeton University, for very kindly consenting to present in an abbreviated form, for the introduction, thoughts excerpted from a planned extended study of the survival of North European Romantic traditions in twentieth-century art. To William Seitz of Brandeis University, G. Stephen Vickers, Chairman of the Department of Fine Art at the University of Toronto, and Jean Boggs, former Curator of the Art Gallery of Toronto, who originally suggested that I undertake this exhibition, I offer my gratitude for their support.

It has been an honour to be the adviser for this major exhibition presented by the Art Gallery of Toronto, and I am grateful to the Director, William J. Withrow, for providing the facilities and personnel of the gallery, and in particular to the Curator, David S. Brooke, whose curatorial department concentrated almost all of its energies on the Mondrian exhibition during the crucial months of production. I am most indebted and grateful to Brydon E. Smith, Assistant Curator, for his unfailing and resourceful support in organizing the exhibition and preparing the catalogue. Of all the members of the staff of the Art Gallery of Toronto who have contributed to the success of the exhibition, I would like to mention especially Charles McFaddin, Margaret Machell, Ella McLaren, Janine Smiter, Fern Little and Yvonne Putzer. I owe a debt of gratitude to Jane Smith for her patience and perception in improving the rough copies and editing the final copy of the catalogue material. Finally, my thanks go to the designer of the catalogue, Frank Newfeld, for his infinite patience and care.

ROBERT P. WELSH

THE CATALOGUE

When two dates are given for a work of art, an oblique bar (e.g. 1935/42) denotes that Mondrian wished to indicate beginning and terminal dates of execution; when a dash is used (e.g. 1906-07) the attribution includes the possibility of either or both dates.

Height precedes width.
Diagonal dimensions indicate the length of each edge of the canvas.

An effort has been made to simulate in type the form of the signature, reproducing underlines and periods and using italics to represent script writing.

The exhibition record includes only those exhibitions devoted to Mondrian which bear directly upon art-historical understanding of his art and is limited by the availability of exhibition catalogues or other corroboratory data.

A question mark after the date of an exhibition indicates a lack of certainty that the work was present in the exhibition. When the question mark occurs after the exhibition number, the work's presence in the exhibition is certain but the number is in doubt.

Works in the list of figures on p. 227 are not in the exhibition.

front cover:
Trees along the Gein (no. 33)

back cover:
Mondrian in his Paris studio
at 26, rue du Départ, *circa* 1926

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CHRONOLOGY

1872 Pieter Cornelis Mondriaan Jr., born March 7 in Amersfoort, Utrecht, the Netherlands. Second child and oldest son of Pieter Cornelis Mondriaan (1839-1915), Headmaster of the Calvinist Primary School in Amersfoort (school and residence Korte Gracht 11, formerly A 363), who had married Johanna Christina de Kok (1839-1905) in 1869 in The Hague.

1880 In April, family moves to Zonnebrink 4 (formerly 280), Winterswijk, near the German border in the *Achterhoek* (back corner) of Gelderland. Father Headmaster of Calvinist Primary School in Winterswijk (now called Wilhelmina School) where Mondrian received his schooling.

1886 Completes primary school and begins period of self-training for a career as artist, with some guidance from his father, a talented amateur draughtsman, and his uncle, Frits Mondriaan (1853-1932), a member of The Hague School, who occasionally visited Winterswijk.

1889 In October qualifies by state examination to teach primary school drawing.

1892 In September state examination, qualifies to teach secondary school drawing. "Studies a little more" (Lurasco) with the minor Dutch Romantic-Realist painter, Joh. Braet van Ueberfeldt (1807-1894), then living in Doelinchem, Gelderland. In November enters the Academy of Fine Art in Amsterdam (see Terptsra P. 338 for list of addresses in that city). Bypasses two years of drawing instruction usually required, because of his secondary school teaching certificate. Follows daytime classes in painting for two years (1892-94). Joins *Kunstliefde*, Utrecht (to 1910).

1894 Takes evening courses in drawing at Academy of Fine Art. Joins *Arti et Amicitiae*, Amsterdam (to 1910/11) and, by 1898 at the latest, *St. Lucas*, Amsterdam (to 1910).

1896 Re-enters Academy of Fine Art in October for second year of evening courses in drawing.

1897 First exhibition with *Arti*.

1898 First known exhibition with *St. Lucas*. Begins lifelong friendship with Mr A. P. van den Briel, later a forestry engineer.

1900 Becomes friend about this time of painter Simon Maris (1873-1935), son of The Hague School painter, Willem Maris (1844-1910).

1901 Passes preliminary examination for Dutch *Prix de Rome*, but not allowed into final competition. Hereafter concentrates chiefly on landscape. Brief trips to Spain (with Simon Maris) and to England about this year have no apparent effect on his art.

1903 Wins *Willink van Collen* prize at *Arti* with a still life. Brief visit to eastern Dutch Brabant near Uden and Nistlerode with Mr van den Briel.

1904 January 18 rents half of a small house at St. Janstraat 29 in Uden (to 27 January 1905). Spends year painting in isolation from any artistic *milieu*. Occasional visits to the "Ossental" area south of Hilvarenbeek along the Belgian border (residence of Mr van den Briel).

1905-08 February 22, 1905, to June 28, 1906, rents an atelier offered throuh the *St. Lucas* organization, at Rembrandtplein 10 in Amsterdam, where he renews contact with painter friends such as Simon Maris and Albert Hulshtoff Pol (1883-1957). Until 1908 paints chiefly in and near Amsterdam. Visits the scenic area along the Gein River and, through the hospitality of Hulshoff Pol, the area called Twente in the Province of Overijssel (known in Mondrian literature as "Oele" because Mr van den Briel once visited him in the hamlet of Oele, where he had rented a room from the local schoolmaster). Begins yearly trips to Island of Walcheren in Zeeland in 1908. Arrival listed in *Domburg Badnieuws* of 12 September. (This and other listings are for arrivals during the preceding week.)

1909 In January first major retrospective exhibition (together with C. R. H. Spoor [1867-1928] and Jan Sluyters [1881-1957]), held in Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, includes works showing definite debts to Pointillist style. Serves as auxiliary member of selection jury of *St. Lucas*. In May joins Theosophic Organization. Arrival in Zeeland listed in *Domburg Badnieuws* of 26 June.

1910 Serves as full member of selection jury of *St. Lucas*. Pointillist works at *St. Lucas* spring exhibition earn him a reputation as one of the most modern artists in Amsterdam. In December helps Conrad Kickert (1882-1965) found *Moderne Kunstkring*, and along with Jan Toorop (1858-1928) and Sluyters is on governing committee. Arrival of F. Mondriaan (*sic*) in Zeeland listed in *Domburg Badnieuws* of 27 August; stays until late October.

1911 Sends a work called *Soleil* to the spring *Indépendents* exhibition in Paris. In summer exhibits in Domburg with a group of Walcheren artists centered around Jan Toorop. *Middleburg Courant* of 26 July mentions him as a resident in nearby Veere. At the first *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition in October-November sees original Cubist works by Braque and Picasso, apparently for the first time. Officially gives up his Amsterdam address 20 December, but receives mail in that city dated 30 January 1912.

1912 Registers in May in Paris. Residence at 26, rue du Départ. Brief summer trip to the Netherlands; arrival in Zeeland listed in *Domburg Badnieuws* of 10 August. Exhibits several works at the *Indépendents* in Paris and the fall *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition in Amsterdam.

1913-14 Continues living at 26, rue du Départ, next to the Gare Montparnasse, exhibiting in Paris, the Netherlands and Germany. Exhibits at Walrecht Gallery in The Hague, opening in June 1914. Returns to the Netherlands, very likely in August. Is prevented by the outbreak of World War I from returning to Paris and remains in the neutral Netherlands. Visits Domburg and Amsterdam before settling in the summer of 1915 in the artists' colony at Laren. First lives with his friend the composer Jacob van Domselaer and then alone in the Pijlsteeg. Has a small studio on the Noolseweg leading to Blaricum. In Laren meets Mr S. B. Slijper who, as friend, patron and ardent collector, has preserved many works by Mondrian from loss.

1915-16 Late 1915 discussions begin with Theo van Doesburg which lead to the formation of the *De Stijl* group in 1916 and 1917. Probably begins writing art-theoretical essays to be published in *De Stijl* periodical.

1917-18 First issue of *De Stijl*, published in October, contains his essays on the nature and meaning of abstract art. Signs *De Stijl* group manifesto of November 1918.

1919 Abandons picture-window frame for thin wood strip set back somewhat from picture surface. Still listed as resident of Laren in catalogue of *Hollandsche Kunstenaarkring* exhibition February-March 1919, and Laren city archives list his departure only as 14 July 1919. Resides temporarily at 5, rue de Coulmiers, before returning to 26, rue du Départ.

1920 His *De Stijl* essays are codified and published as *Le Néo-Plasticisme* by the Galerie Léonce Rosenberg (trans. *Die Neue Gestaltung* at the Bauhaus in Weimar, Germany, 1925). The above terms are the French and German equivalents Mondrian chose for the Dutch phrase *Nieuwe Beelding*, adapted from the title of a book by the Dutch Theosophist, Dr M. H. J. Schoenmaekers, and used in his own *De Stijl* articles.

1922-23 Retrospective exhibition on his 50th birthday, organized by his Dutch friends S. B. Slijper, Petrus Alma and J. J. P. Oud, fails to alleviate financial difficulties. Exhibitions in 1922 and 1923 at Léonce Rosenberg, Paris, bring him some notoriety, but few other exhibitions and apparently few sales follow until *circa* 1925-26.

1924-25 Because of van Doesburg's reintroduction of diagonal elements (Elementarism) in his own work during 1924-25, Mondrian withdraws from *De Stijl* in 1925. Hereafter works independently and contributes to various exhibitions chiefly in Germany, France and the Netherlands, and, through Katherine Dreier, to the International Exhibition of the *Société Anonyme in* Brooklyn. Continues to write theoretical essays which develop the basic ideas of Neo-Plasticism.

1930 Exhibits with *Cercle et Carré* group founded by Joquin Torres Garcia and Michel Seuphor.

1931 Joins the *Abstraction-Création* group founded in 1931 by Georges Vantongerloo and Auguste Herbin.

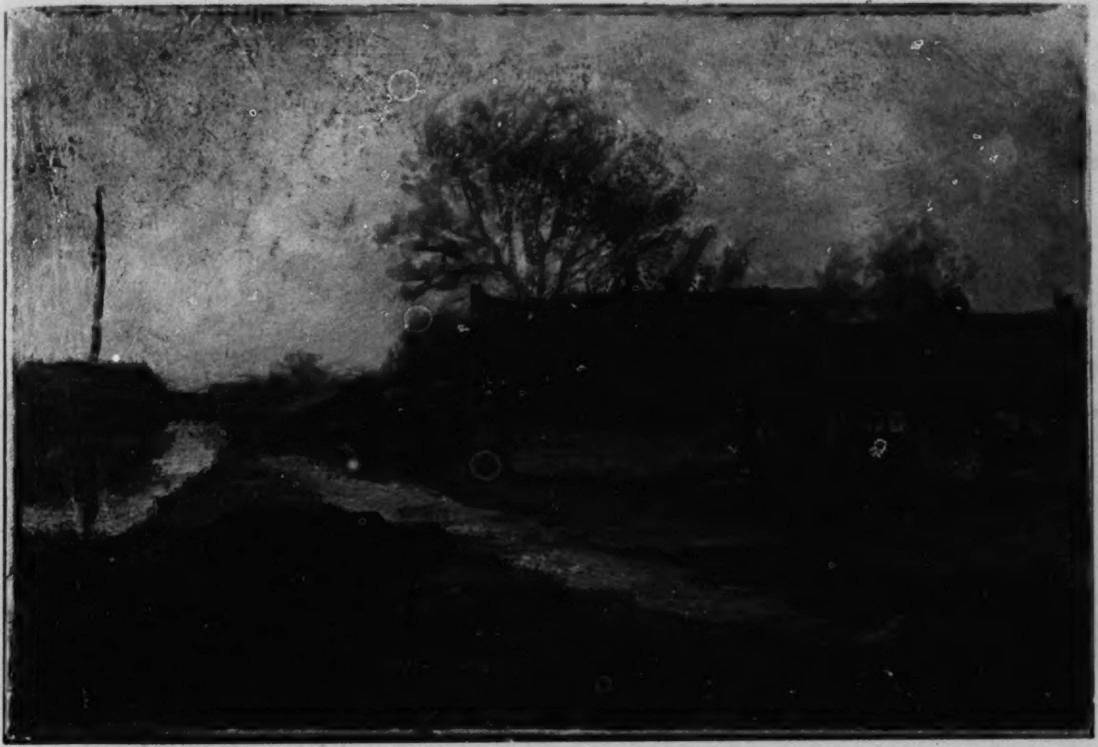
1934 Meets the American artist Harry Holtzman and Ben Nicholson in Paris.

1936 In March moves to 278, boulevard Raspail because rue du Départ studio to be torn down.

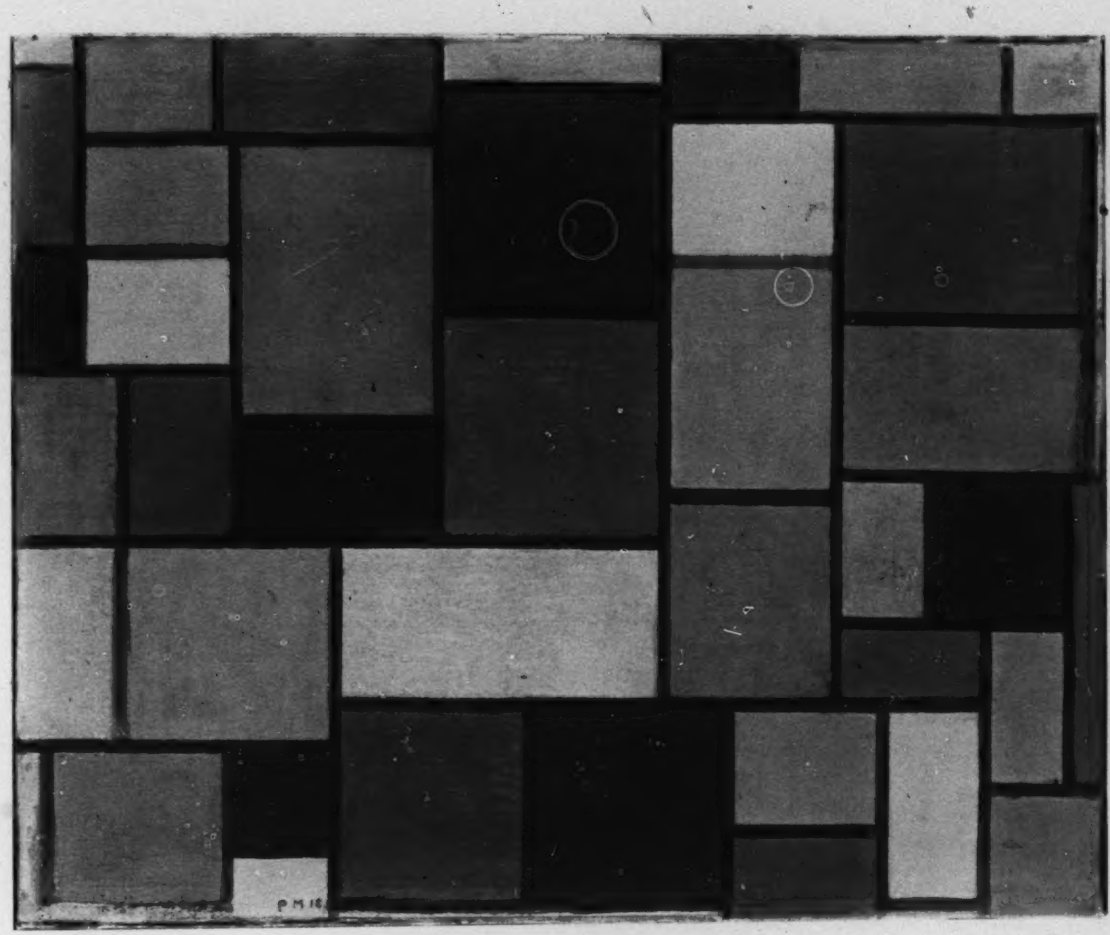
1938-39 After expressing interest in emigration to America, leaves in September 1938 for England instead. Studio at 60, Park Hill Road, Hampstead, London, near those of Naum Gabo and Ben Nicholson. Joins Circle group.

1940-43 Comes to New York with assistance of Harry Holtzman. Arrives in October and takes a studio at 353 East 52nd Street, corner of First Avenue. Becomes exhibiting member of American Abstract Artists. One-man exhibitions of paintings at Valentine-Dudensing Gallery, January-February 1942 and March-April 1943. October 1943, moves to 15 East 59th Street. Holtzman, Fritz Glarner, Carl Holty and Charmion von Wiegand are among his closest friends but none of them actually becomes his student or shares a studio. Also encouraged by influential members of the New York art world, such as Peggy Guggenheim and James Johnson Sweeney. Writes several important essays containing his final thoughts on Neo-Plasticism.

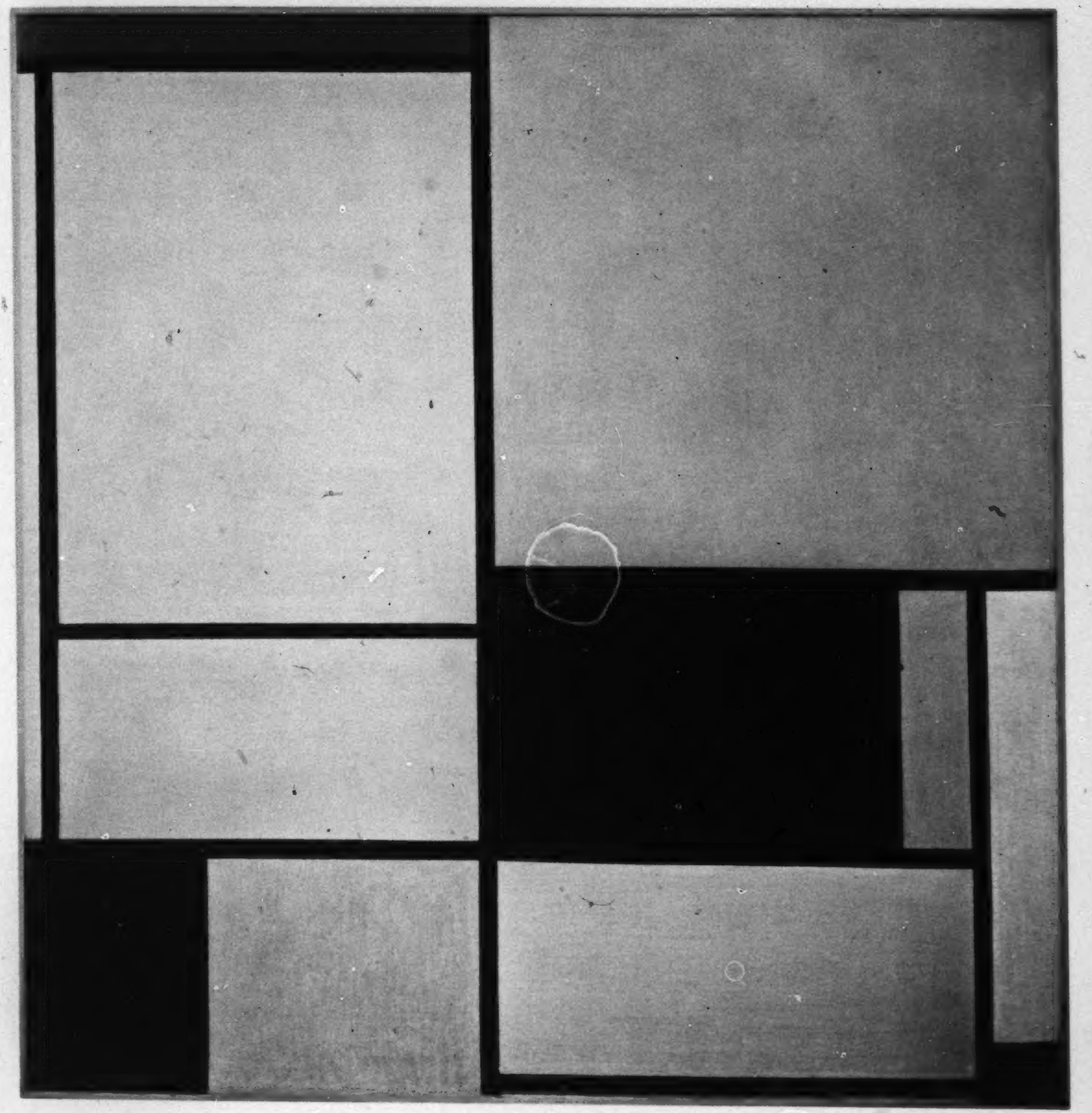
1944 Dies February 1 from pneumonia.



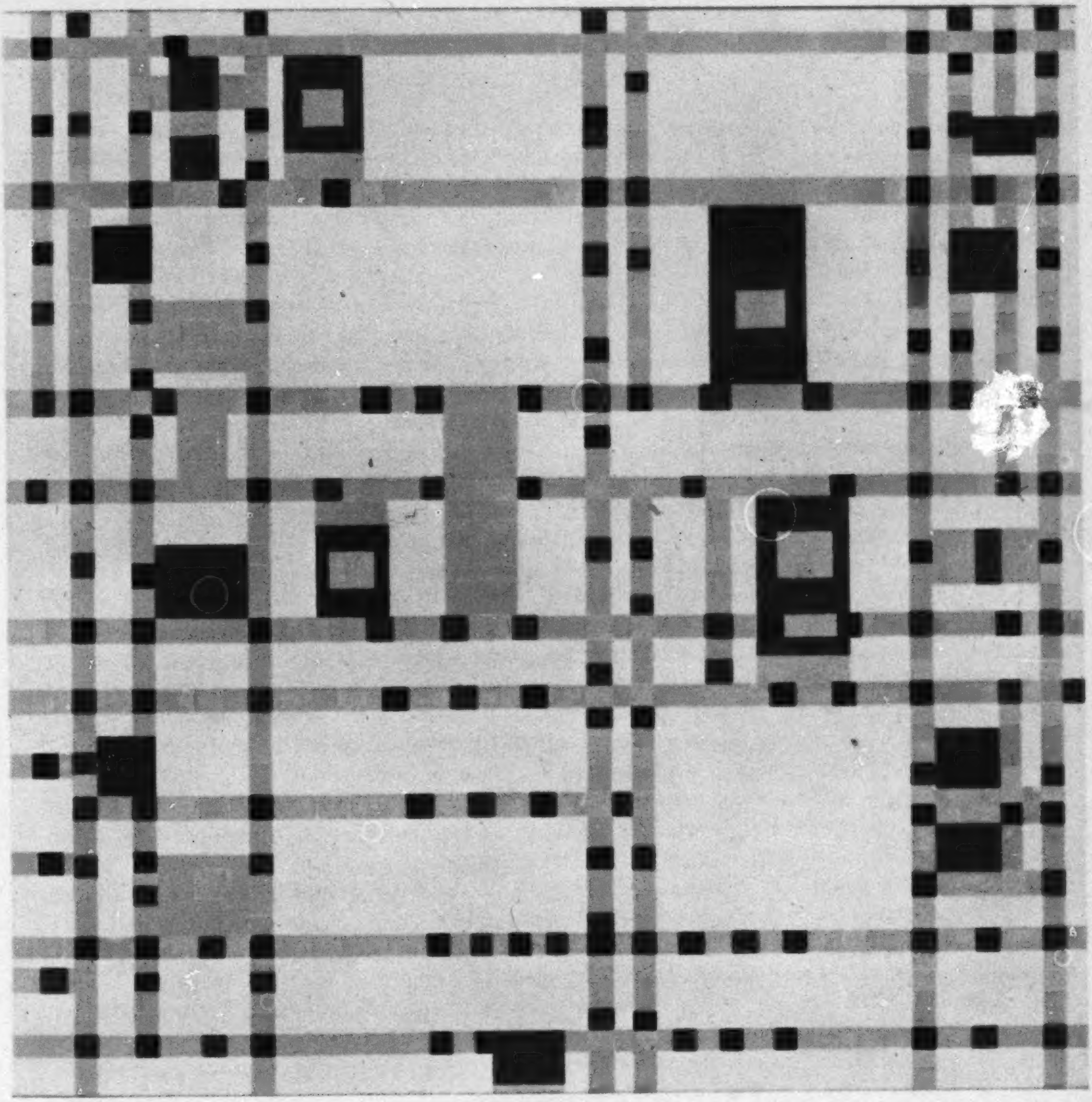
10 LANDSCAPE WITH HOUSES AND CANAL



84 COMPOSITION: COLOUR PLANES WITH GREY CONTOURS



91 · COMPOSITION



ROBERT ROSENBLUM

Notes on Mondrian and Romanticism

Few artists have been as falsified by their popular reputations as Mondrian. Faced with the insistent economy of his lean rectilinear structures and the ascetic chill of his colours and paint surfaces, casual spectators have found Mondrian's art synonymous with those mechanistic and impersonal qualities most peculiar to our century. So ingrained are these prejudices that they have often prevented us from seeing that Mondrian's art belongs to traditions of the nineteenth as well as of the twentieth century; and that, more particularly, it may be related to themes, emotions and goals associated with that restless condition of nineteenth century experience, Romanticism, whose very name may at first sound like a contradiction of all that Mondrian's art has come to symbolize.

But such connections should not be surprising, for in many ways Mondrian was a child of the nineteenth-century. He was born in 1872, half a generation before the major Cubist masters; and it was only in 1912, when he was already forty and had a long and arduous career behind him, that he fully confronted the problems of modern art in Paris. Until then, he had worked in a provincial Dutch pictorial ambience that maintained belated landscape and *genre* types inherited from the previous century. Still more important, his very conception of art was immersed in Romantic and especially Northern Romantic attitudes. For Mondrian, a work of art was never a self-sufficient object of pleasure, as it was for Renoir or for Matisse, but rather a means to mystical ends. Like the German Romantic artists, Caspar David Friedrich and Philipp Otto Runge, Mondrian scrutinized nature not for its sensuous surfaces, but as a vehicle for contacting remote and timeless presences that lay beyond the shifting appearances of reality. Indeed, Mondrian's temperament, like that of another great Dutch artist, van Gogh, was an intensely religious one, in which a rigorous faith in the spiritual truths of art gradually replaced the more orthodox piety of his early Calvinist and Theosophist beliefs. A sense of art as something solemn and transcendent pervaded Mondrian's entire career.

It is in the first half of his career, until 1915, that we feel most explicitly the constant points of reference to a Northern Romantic tradition that, in regions like the Low Countries, Germany, England and Scandinavia, runs a parallel, if erratic, course to the consecutive and harmonious achievements of modern French art. Only a glance at the self-portrait drawing of 1908-09 (no. 50a) presents us immediately with a psychological close-up whose intensity is so direct and unsettling that, for analogies in the history of modern art, we must turn back first to the self-portraits of van Gogh, and then to the searching self-inquiry revealed in the hypnotic stares of a group of Northern Romantic self-portraits that include, above all, those by Friedrich, Carstens and Palmer. Typically for Mondrian, this scrutiny can become still more intensified in an even greater concentration on the subject. Thus, in a related self-portrait drawing of 1908-09 (no. 50b), the physiognomy is pared down to an astonishing confrontation with the artist's eyes alone, as if these were the most vital points through which one could discern those hidden, intangible experiences that Mondrian constantly sought to disclose behind the façades of palpable reality.

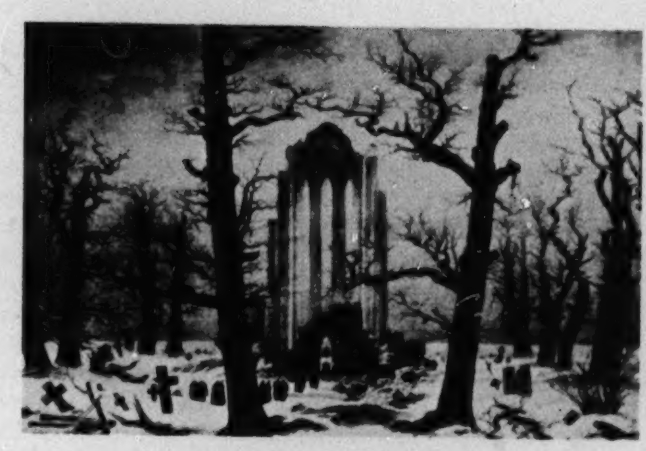
If Mondrian's few but potent efforts to convey the mysteries of the human face may be aligned with traditions of Romantic portraiture, it is in his landscapes, above all, that we find the most direct legacy of earlier Romantic attitudes. Even such adolescent efforts as *Woods with Stream* of 1880 (no. 1) and *Ships in the Moonlight* of 1890 (no. 2) betray his youthful connections with the popularized vestiges of Romantic motifs still current in the Low Countries — the mysteries of a sheltered, unspoiled corner of nature or the dark, dramatic silhouettes of ships seen against the infinities of a cloudy, moonlit night on the seashore; and in *Church seen from the Rear* (no. 7), we have a still more personal statement of a favorite Romantic theme that, as in the work of Corot or Constable, would merge nature and religious architecture into a tranquil, meditative harmony. Thus, by the early 1890's, three of the major themes that were later to preoccupy him — woods, church and sea — had already made their appearance in his work.

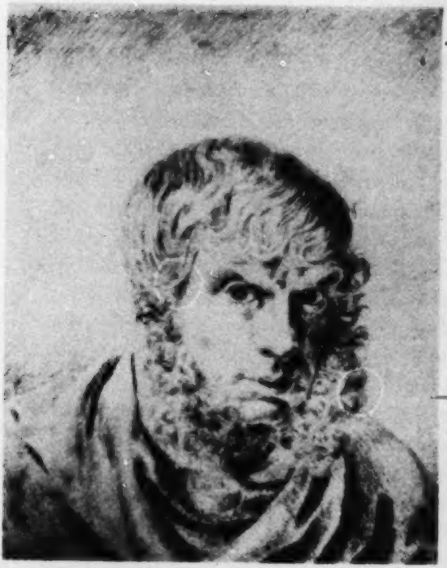
By 1900, these conventionalized paraphrases of Romantic landscape themes were transformed into statements of remarkable individuality. For instance, two views of a *House on the Gein* of that year (nos. 19 and 20) take a common enough motif from a repertory of Romantic picturesqueness — a gabled farmhouse reflected in water — but turn it into an image of unexpected rigour and force. Thanks to the choice of that frontal view which would come to dominate Mondrian's art, and to the insistence upon a strong axis of symmetry between the upper and lower halves of the pictures, what might be merely casual records of ramshackle charm are suddenly isolated as forms of uncommon stillness and fixity, in which object and reflection join structural forces to make a heraldic, diamond-shaped whole that is more than the sum of its two mirrored parts. Indeed, this preoccupation with axial symmetry, which has parallels not only in the late landscapes of Monet but in those by the Norwegian Munch, the Swiss Hodler and the Belgian Khnopff, obsessed Mondrian throughout his early years. Although his later abstract paintings are often thought of as masterpieces of wilfully asymmetrical composition, this mastery was gained only through a slow and scrupulous study of one-to-one equivalents in landscape that frequently approached the disarming clarity of a purely symmetrical structure aligned either vertically or horizontally. Thus, the drawing *Farm at Duivendrecht* of *circa* 1905 (no. 28) surprises compositional expectations by raising the horizontal axis of reflection to nearly half the height of the picture, so that we almost feel that the image would be the same upside down. In works like this, Mondrian began to find means of destroying palpable reality by confounding it with its illusory reflections, as well as of disclosing a latent order and unity beneath the varied surfaces of nature.

Similarly, Mondrian's interpretations of other familiar motifs, like windmills and churches, reject the oblique and picturesque irregularity afforded them in traditional Dutch landscape painting and gradually approach them, instead, from a frontal view that imposes upon these buildings a stark and emblematic clarity. In *Church at Zoutelande* of 1909-10 (no. 57) and *The Red Mill* of 1911 (no. 59), these landmarks of the Dutch countryside are presented with such a bare and lucid axis of symmetry that they become awesome forms of towering, immeasurable dimensions, utterly remote from prosaic *genre* activities. Here again, Mondrian's art evokes Romantic comparisons, particularly with the no less austere and pious landscapes of Friedrich. A century before, the German master, too, felt dissatisfied with the presentation of nature as a delightfully varied panorama and sought in the spectacle of trees, clouds, mountains, sunsets, water and forest churches the keys to an underlying mystery. Like Mondrian, he ordered these manifestations of what he felt was a divine force in terms of an uncanny geometric clarity. His persistent axes of symmetry, his simple parallelisms of form, his hieratic frontality make us feel, as do Mondrian's, that a spiritual skeleton of transcendent order lies beneath the transient, material surface of things.

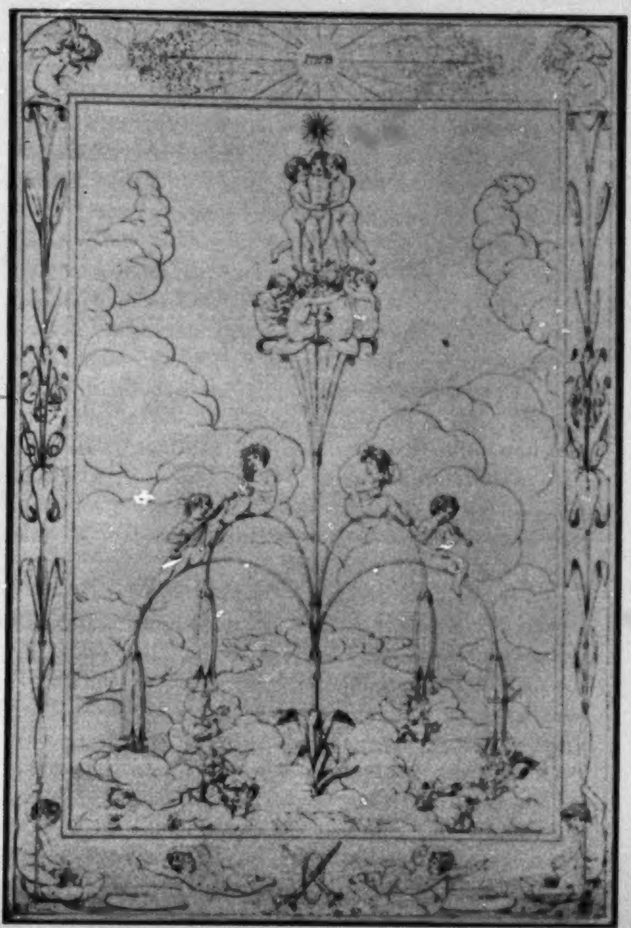
It was precisely this material surface of things that Mondrian, too, thought of only as an outer layer that veiled hidden, intangible forces in nature. In his effort to see, as it were, the abstract forest for the real trees, he scrutinized his motifs with the empathic intensity of a Romantic poet who would find emanations of the divine in a blade of grass. The early flower studies, in particular, bear witness to this wide-eyed attention to nature's marvelous detail. In the 1908 water colour and painting of a chrysanthemum (nos. 45a and b), one flower is singled out for the kind of compelling scrutiny found in the self-portraits of 1908-09 (nos. 50a and b). Totally separated from any prosaic environment, the flower forces us to concentrate upon it not as a decorative object, as it might be in a French painting,

CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH (1774-1840)
The Abbey Graveyard under Snow, 1819
(now destroyed)
Formerly Staatliche Museen,
Nationalgalerie, Berlin





CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH (1774-1840)
Self-Portrait, *circa* 1810
Staatliche Museen, Nationalgalerie, Berlin



PHILIPP OTTO RUNGE (1777-1810)
Morning, 1803
Kunsthalle, Hamburg

but rather as the container of a pulsating, organic vitality that is here on the verge of expiration. The abstract backgrounds, as in the comparable flower studies of van Gogh, partake of these throbbing life forces, echoing through dilating aureoles or serpentine contours the living movement of stem, leaf and bud. And in other flower studies like *Amaryllis* of 1910 (no. 56), the form of the flower is fixed more heraldically around a central axis, in the manner of the churches and windmills, so that we sense it as a kind of archetype that symbolizes the whole species. This fusion of an abstract geometric order with the irregular, quivering shapes of growing leaves and buds was, to be sure, part of the decorative repertory of *Art Nouveau* in the Low Countries, as elsewhere; but in Mondrian's art, this combination is instilled with a dramatic intensity and seriousness that distinguish it from the pallid mystery and thin-blooded aestheticism of, say, Khnopff, Toorop or Thorn Prikker. Again, Romantic prototypes are called to mind, especially the flower studies of Runge, who, like Goethe in his own botanical investigations, sought out the universal in the particular, focusing such rapt attention on the geometric order behind the diverse forms of lily, poppy, rose or cornflower that we feel in them the wondrous embodiment of some divine force in nature. The flowers of Runge, like those of Mondrian, could never be placed in a vase on a living-room table.

In his naturalistic as in his abstract work, Mondrian continually struggled to subordinate individual parts to taut, organic wholes, whether the parts were the stem of a flower, the trunk of a tree, the cross on a church façade or, later, the black bar of a rectilinear grid. This sense of organic vitality is perhaps most prominent in some of the landscapes of 1908. For example, in *Castle Ruin: Brederode* (no. 49), Mondrian takes one of the most prophetically Romantic motifs from seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painting (the ruin is used like that in Ruysdael's *Jewish Cemetery)* and attempts, like Friedrich, to weave a structural and emotional web between the arcade of leafless, skeletal trees and the withering relic of man's work seen in the distance. This continuous network of broad patches of paint enlivened by nerve-like, tree-branch lines of extraordinary animation is even more dramatic in the luminous *Woods near Oele* and *Red Tree* of the same year (nos. 51 and 54). So powerfully is the organic force of the whole conveyed that individual landscape elements seem to disintegrate in a vibrant pictorial stuff that begins to transcend identification as earth, tree, sky. In *Woods near Oele*, the blue verticals of the tree trunks fuse with the blue interstices of the sky, and the ruddy striations of sunlit earth in the distance are confounded with their chromatic equivalents in the foreground reflection. In *Red Tree*, isolated like Mondrian's flowers for the most intensive scrutiny, the very sap of this living organism seems to bleed into the red patches that animate the continuous blue plane melting sky into earth. For such astonishing empathy into the very being of a tree, one must once more turn first to van Gogh and then to Friedrich, the only other artists who could endow a tree with emotions of this cosmic import.

Again and again, Mondrian's work strikes familiar chords of theme and feeling when seen in the context of Northern Romantic art. It is worth noting, for instance, that three of his most persistent iconographical motifs — a bleak and uninhabited landscape, a frontally-viewed church façade, an infinite vista of the sea — are precisely those which most inspired Friedrich. But Mondrian's genius, like Friedrich's, lay not so much in his choice of these motifs but in his ability to saturate them with a personal sense of drama that could extract from tree, church or sea an experience we feel obliged to call religious. For both these artists created a disturbing awareness that infinite mysteries are concealed behind the changing surfaces of nature and that ultimately these mysteries are reducible to one. Thus, Mondrian's church façades, appropriate to the familiar religious implications of such a motif, are steeped with the artist's characteristic passion for transforming tangible matter into something bodiless and spiritual. In *Church at Zoutelande* of 1909-10 (no. 57), the heavy buttresses and walls of the Gothic tower dissolve into earth and sky, thanks to the dematerializing effect of the broad and discrete flecks of paint; yet at the same time, the regularized, striated patterns of the brush-work enforce the sense of a simple unity of structure that lies behind this vibrant surface. Similarly, in a later church façade of 1913-14 (no. 76), these impulses to destroy matter are carried even further, thanks to the impetus newly provided bv Cubism. Here the cruciform patterns dissolve the wall entirely so that we are left with the leanest, most impalpable skeleton whose rudimentary vocabulary of parallels and perpendiculars produces, as in the later abstract paintings, both infinitely simple and infinitely complex results. So thorough-going were these dematerializations that finally the object disappeared entirely, and the firm but ghostly bones that remain might be interchangeably those of a church, a tree, a flower, or a window view. It is only the most painstaking research of Robert Welsh that has recently identified what was thought to be an abstract composition of 1913-14 (no. 77) as one in fact inspired by the same late nineteenth century Parisian church, Notre-Dame des Champs, used for the drawing *Church Façade* (no. 76).

Mondrian's Romantic quest for spirit rather than substance is no less dramatic in his views of the sea. The wintry bareness and desolation we feel in his most moving interpretations of trees and houses are even more conspicuous in the many drawings and paintings he made of the flat monotonous expanses of Dutch dunes on the North Sea, a motif that, as in the work of Friedrich, places the spectator on the very brink of the most elemental mysteries in nature and leaves him alone there to meditate on the infinite oneness of sky, sea and sand. The haunting solemnity of these works belongs to the world of Nordic landscape sensibility, a vision of pristine stillness that we experience again, after Friedrich, in the heraldic symmetries of Hodler's and Munch's barren views of Swiss and Norwegian mountain lakes. In the 1909-10 painting, *Dune V* (no. 61), all of nature is distilled to a primaeval simplicity untouched by man. The yellow-ochre highlights of the sand are complemented only by an expansive blue that extends slowly from the foreground dunes through the sea and sky above; and the irregularities of pattern in the dunes seem only surface ripples upon an ageless structure that gravitates from an elliptical, egg-shaped swell toward the absolute tranquility of the horizon line visible at the left. Reduced to this flat continuity of paint, water, earth and air no longer seem separable elements, but are absorbed, rather, in an all-engulfing whole. This Romantic motif of meditation before the infinities of the sea so haunted Mondrian that he repeated it in the very last of his works that still have an explicit reference to observed nature, the *Pier and Ocean* series of 1914-15 (nos. 79a and b). But here, as in the very last studies inspired by trees, flowers or church façades, the identity of the subject is almost entirely obscured by Mondrian's relentless reduction of the seen world to its most elemental components, in this case a twinkling infinity of crisscrossing fragments that seem ultimately to be subsumed in larger cruciform whole.

Indeed, after 1915, those particular motifs which Mondrian had scrutinized so intensely were finally banished from his work, and for the remaining three decades of his career he dealt exclusively with a pictorial vocabulary that we conveniently call abstract. Yet it should not be forgotten that those vital rectilinear structures of rest and movement, oneness and multiplicity which animate his later work are the ascetic but passionate distillations of his early and profoundly Romantic impulses to disclose the abiding mysteries concealed behind the varied façades of nature.

1

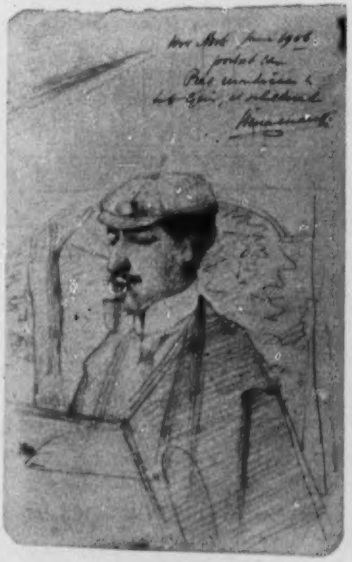
The Naturalistic Period:

Until 1908 Mondrian's painting was strongly influenced by a *retardataire* Dutch landscape tradition. His basically conservative temperament was reinforced before this time by his family background and early training. At fourteen, having been taught drawing by his father, a gifted amateur draughtsman, Mondrian began to teach himself painting. His earliest works are executed with descriptive realism, although the subjects chosen are moonlit or woodland Romantic landscapes. His uncle, Frits Mondriaan, a member of The Hague School, gave him occasional guidance in landscape painting. The Hague School Impressionists favoured the bucolic rather than the Romantic aspects of Barbizon traditions and were particularly interested in effects of light, atmosphere and weather, thus earning the epithet, "the grey school".

It was not until 1892, when Mondrian had passed two state examinations for drawing instructors, that he left his home in provincial Winterswijk for the relatively cosmopolitan city of Amsterdam. During several years of study at the National Academy of Fine Arts there, he was influenced by the work of the Amsterdam Impressionists. These painters reacted against the Barbizon tradition of The Hague School by using a freer and more impulsive brush stroke to capture the sombre aspects of the emerging industrial environment, and as a result they were called "the brown school".

The Hague Impressionists, such as Anton Mauve, the brothers Jacob, Thijs and Willem Maris and Johann Weissenbruch, and the Amsterdam Impressionists, such as George Breitner and Isaac Israels, constituted the living tradition of painting for most Dutch artists in the late nineteenth century, although the title of "Impressionism" is

1888-1908



SIMON MARIS (1873-1935)
Piet Mondrian painting
along the Gein, June 1906
Mrs C. Maris-den Breejen

justified only imperfectly by their interest in natural *plein-air* lighting and their painterly brush techniques. Mondrian may have admired individual members of these schools, but he did not study under any of the better known masters and was not closely acquainted with them.

Even in Amsterdam, Mondrian seems to have been for some time unaware of contemporary artistic developments in France. The most notable qualities of his nineteenth-century works relate to his firm control of pictorial structure rather than to any *avant garde* or uniquely expressive style. By the turn of the century his art was incorporating aspects of the Symbolist and *Art Nouveau* works produced in the early 1890's by Jan Toorop and Floris Verster, but his approach remained basically realistic.

Throughout most of the first decade of the twentieth century, Mondrian's art further developed these various influences without submitting exclusively to any one of them. In the 1905-07 period, many canvases remained descriptively realistic. Simultaneously, canvases in a loose Impressionist technique, in which natural three-dimensional form is veiled and dissolved by effects of atmosphere and light, evolved into intimations of non-objective art.

The most significant change in Mondrian's art occurred in 1908. All of his work before that year can be grouped under the classification of naturalism. However, this classification should not imply a complete stylistic break, since anticipations of Mondrian's later style may be seen in his naturalistic period, and traces of his earlier approach often carry over into his Cubist and even post-Cubist works.

1 Woods with Stream

Mondrian's earliest known dated work indicates the technical proficiency in drawing which he had achieved by the age of sixteen, studying independently and aided by his father, a gifted amateur draughtsman. In the following year, 1889, he passed the state examination for primary school drawing instructors. His signature on the accrediting certificate (Document no. 2) bears out his authorship of this drawing and several other very early works (e.g. nos. 2, 5 and S: c.c. 32).

In *Woods with Stream,* and a companion drawing from the same collection, *Cottage in a Mountain Forest,* Mondrian chose to treat a Romantic subject with minutely descriptive detail. The subject and general style correspond to work by the Dutch Romantic landscapist, B. C. Koekkoek (1803-62), whose influence in artistically provincial areas of the Netherlands may have lingered for a number of years after his work had gone out of fashion in centres such as The Hague and Amsterdam. Mondrian lived near Winterswijk, not far from the German city of Cleve on the Rhine, where Koekkoek had founded a drawing academy in 1841. A slightly more Barbizon-influenced tonalism than is typical of the work of Koekkoek may have resulted from Mondrian's acquaintance with work by Dutch painters such as J. W. and A. G. (Gerard) Bilders.

Unless the source of this drawing is uncovered by further research, the degree to which Mondrian used another work of art rather than a natural setting must remain conjectural. However, the rendering of foliage in tiny patches of shadow and highlight, and the studied interest in effects of lighting on natural form are qualities shared by the few other works which definitely date before his matriculation in the autumn of 1892 at the National Academy of Art in Amsterdam. Mondrian's predilections for stressing the verticality of the tree trunks, seeing them from close by and inducing the viewer's attention to filter past them into the less articulated background areas of the woodland setting are habits of thought which will recur throughout all naturalistic phases of his career. The complete absence of figures and man-made objects is another characteristic trait, but it would be arbitrary to read any profound overtones of German Romantic *Urwald* imagery into this essentially naturalistic and picturesque study.

1888

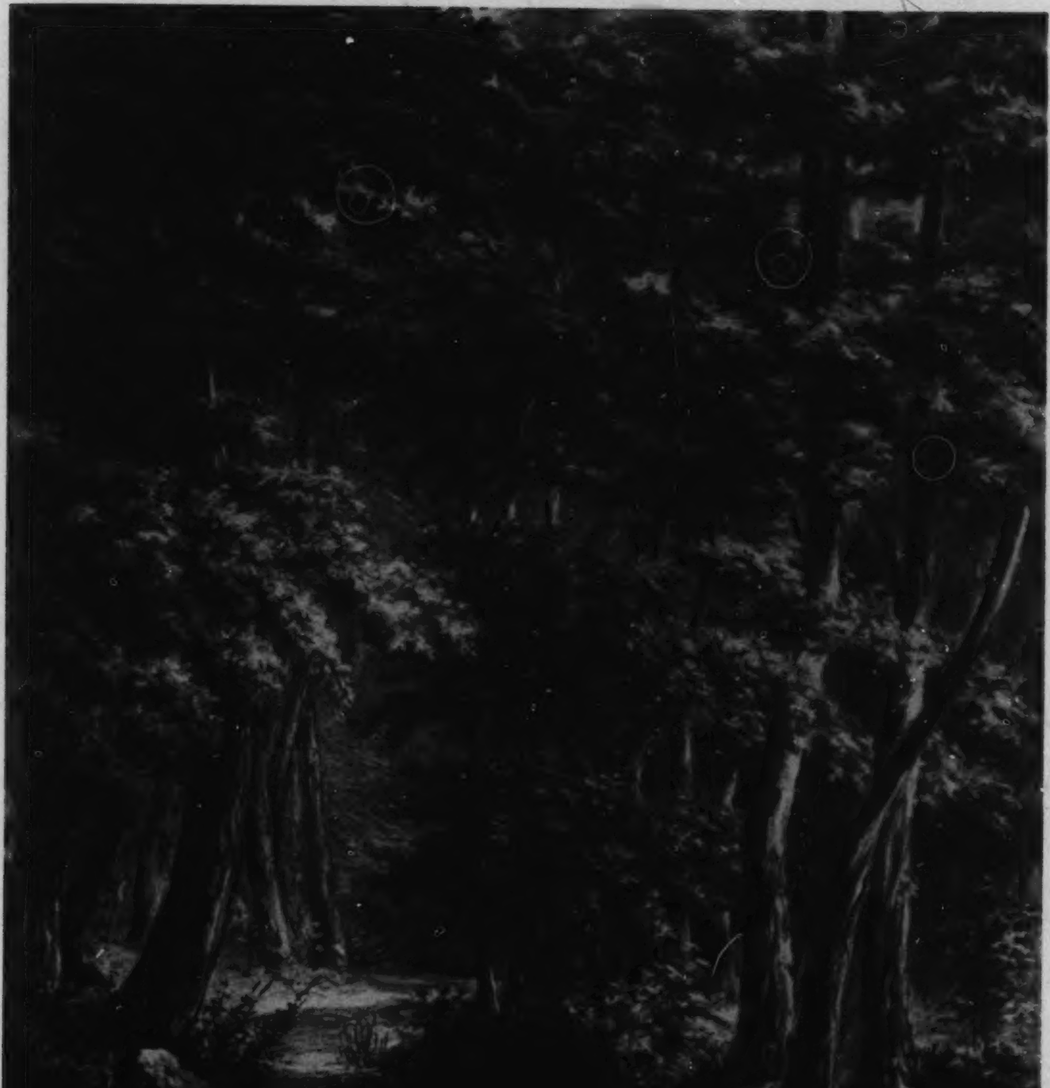
Charcoal with crayon on paper

24-7/16 x 18-15/16 in., 62 x 48 cm.

Signed lower left: *PCM '88*
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance: acquired *circa* 1928
in Breda by Mrs E. Filius-Torcque
from Mondrian's sister,
Johanna Christina; to present owner,
daughter of Mrs Filius, 1935

Mrs F. Nieuwenhuysen-Filius



2 Ships in the Moonlight

This painting is one of two works dated 1890. Both have signatures in the same elegant script with which Mondrian signed his primary school teaching certificate in 1889 and the two drawings (see no. 1) of 1888. Although this work predates Mondrian's matriculation at the Amsterdam Academy by two years, the subject could hardly have been found in the neighbourhood of Winterswijk. It probably represents a harbour scene from the Dutch coast, perhaps a fishing port along the Zuider Zee. The companion piece from the same collection is inscribed with the word "copy", leaving some doubt whether a second version of his own or someone else's work was meant. (The English spelling of the word adds a further note of mystery.) The Romantic setting and general style of *Ships in the Moonlight* suggest some possible relation to the mid-nineteenth-century Dutch artist J. Th. Abels (1803-66), whose own moonlit harbour scenes revive in part a *genre* in seventeenth-century Dutch painting best exemplified in the *œuvre* of Aert van der Neer.

Like the night harbour scenes in the early work of Jongkind, this single known example by Mondrian has a considerable sense of personal style. The various sails and harbour pilings set roughly parallel to the picture plane anticipate Mondrian's later use of *repoussoir* objects functioning as stage *coulisses.* This Poussin-like approach to composition seems an essential aspect of his artistic temperament, since compositional order is more emphasized in his work than in typical works by the artists suggested above as possible influences. The deft execution relates to the finely detailed realism of *Woods with Stream* (no. 1) and shows Mondrian's considerable technical proficiency in the oil medium at the age of eighteen.

1890

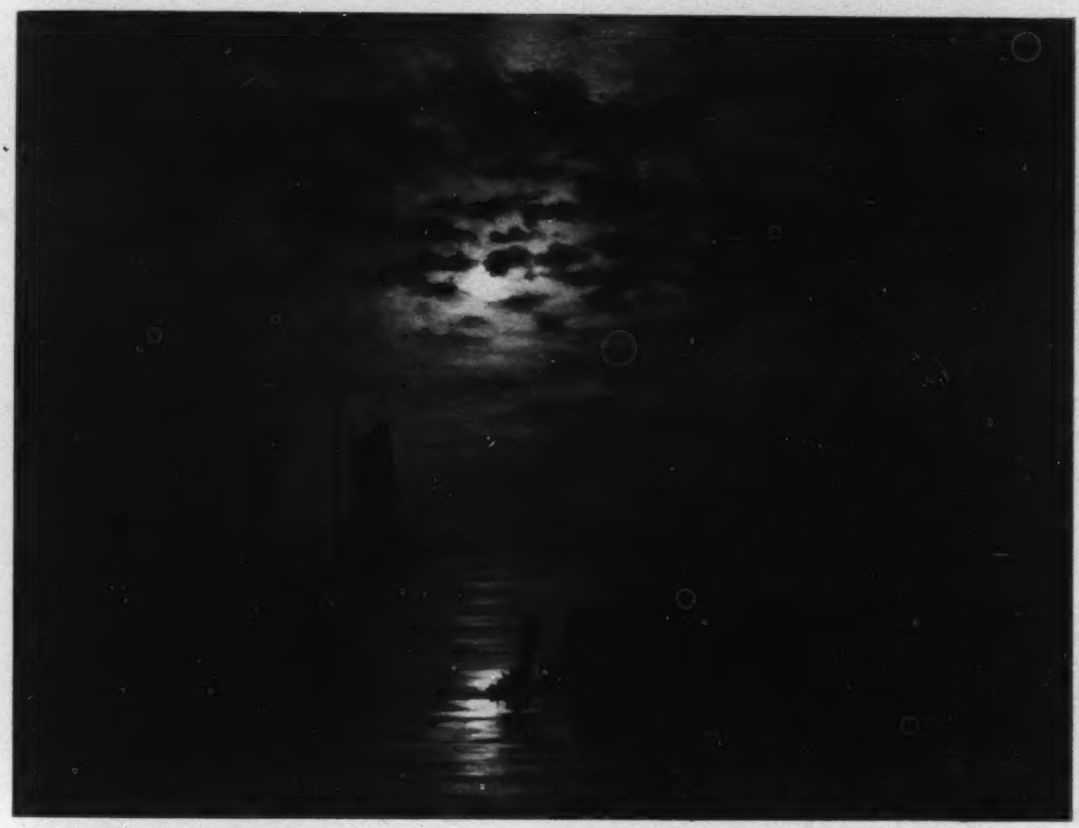
Oil on canvas

12 x 16 in., 30.5 x 40.6 cm.

Signed lower right: ***PCM 18*** $\frac{18}{10}$ **90**
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance: acquired from the artist in Winterswijk by members of the Tenkink family who knew him well; in 1895 to Dr A. J. Tenkink, Vorden, father of the present owner

Dr J. C. Tenkink



3 Hay Sheaves in a Field

This carefully composed landscape probably represents an early independent attempt at *plein-air* painting. A setting near Winterswijk, in the *achterhoek* ("back corner") of Gelderland, seems likely (unless an early visit to the area of the Gooi near Laren and Blaricum is supposed), since ploughed grain fields and an undulating land surface are common there, but not in the flat meadows surrounding Amsterdam. It is known (see Lurasco) that Piet received some initial instruction in landscape painting from his uncle, Frits Mondriaan, who sometimes came to Winterswijk from The Hague in order to paint in the surrounding countryside. This work, however, shows little trace of the atmospheric or tonal Impressionism of The Hague School to which Frits belonged. Its dabbing brush technique and naive realism relate it instead to specific passages in Mondrian's *Puppy* (S: c.c. 32), dated 1891, and, in general approach, to *Woods with Stream* (no. 1).

1891

Oil on cardboard

11-1/4 x 15 in., 28.5 x 38 cm.

Signed lower right: P. MONDRIAAN

Provenance: acquired by present
owner from auction at Mak van Waay,
Amsterdam, 26 May 1964
(cat. 156, no. 370)

Mr S. B. Slijper

4 Dusk

The title derives from a label on the reverse side of the painting inscribed with the Dutch title *Schemering*. The date 1890 and the name Piet Mondriaan also appear, although there is no certainty that the writing is in the artist's hand. However, the restrained Impressionist brush-work and the bucolic subject matter of The Hague School, as well as the title's emphasis on a late afternoon setting, suggest the influence of Frits Mondriaan, who had studied under Willem Maris.

The farmland setting, which shows no trace of the irrigation canals common to the flat meadows surrounding Amsterdam, suggests an eastern Dutch locale, as does the somewhat irregular pattern of the tree formations in the background. In fact, in composition as well as mood, this work strikingly anticipates similar features in the *"Oele"* landscapes of *circa* 1906-07 (e.g. New York, 1964, Frumkin nos. 4, 9, 10 and 13), which derive from his visits at that time to an area of the Netherlands relatively close to Winterswijk. Although derivative in style and modest in expressive intent, this early work displays Mondrian's penchant, found in many of his late naturalistic landscapes, for the luminous effects of cloud formations seen in late afternoon.

1890

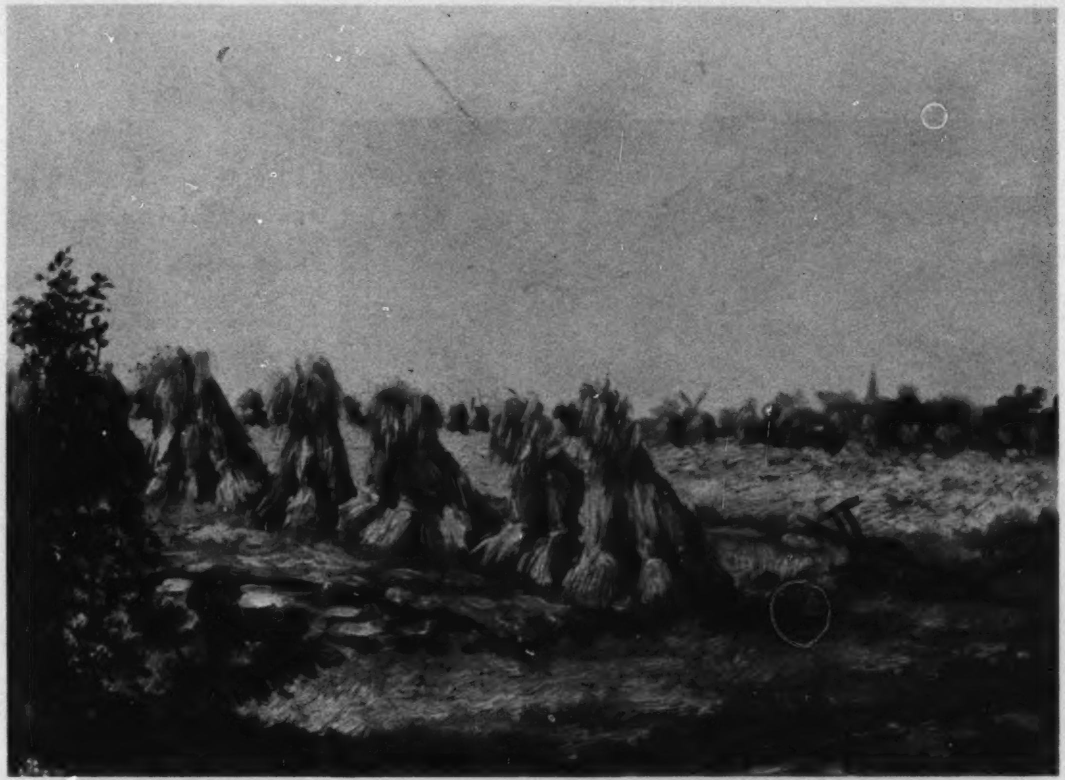
Oil on canvas (remounted on board)

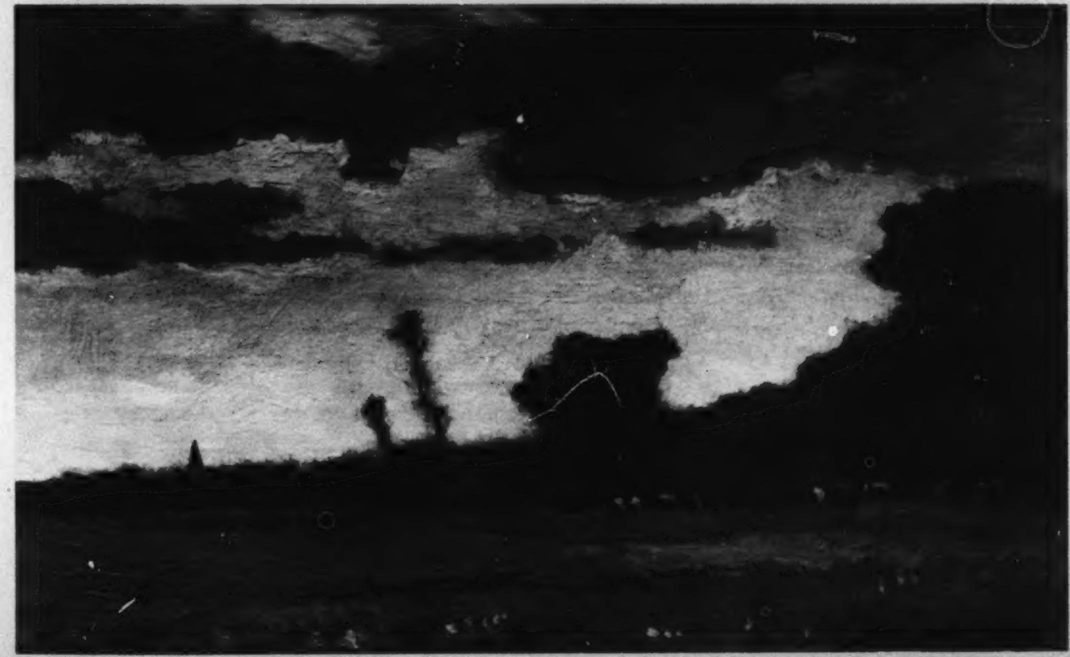
10-1/2 x 17 in., 26.6 x 43.1 cm.

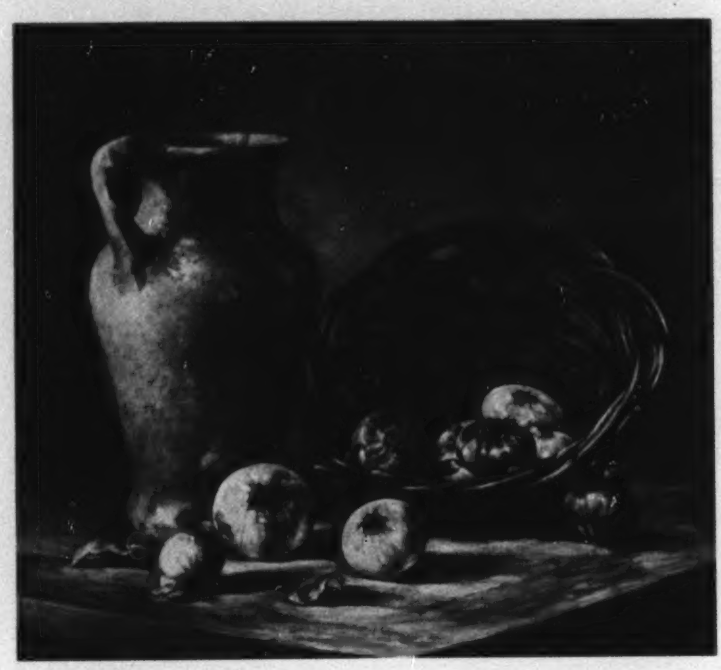
Signed lower right: Piet Mondriaan

Provenance: acquired 1964 by
Gallery Ravenstein, Brussels, at
public auction in that city;
to present owner 1965

E. V. Thaw and Co., Inc.







1892

Oil on canvas

25-5/8 x 28-3/8 in., 65 x 72 cm.

Signed lower left:
P. C. MONDRIAAN Jr., 9/92
and lower right: *PCM* '92
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance: acquired by
Johann B. Lambeek from Mondrian
while both were students at the
Academy in Amsterdam; to present
owner, nephew of Mr Lambeek, 1947

Exhibitions: Utrecht 1892, no. 81

Mr A. J. J. Lambeek

5 Still Life: Jug and Onions

Despite the date in the lower left, September 1892, this is almost certainly the *Kan met Uijen* which Mondrian sent the previous spring, with three other still-life paintings and a charcoal landscape drawing, to the *Kunstliefde* exhibition in Utrecht. The second signature, in monogram, which occurs otherwise only on works of an earlier date, supports this identification, as does a critic's opinion ("e . . ." in the *Utrechtsche Prov. en Stedelijk Dagblad,* 27 April 1892) that Mondrian's still-life works were painted "with great exactitude" and were "lovely in colour, bright in lighting, but . . . lacking in poetic mood." Even in artistically conservative Utrecht, Mondrian's sober realism was felt to lack the qualities of atmosphere and the more painterly approach which the critic doubtless knew and preferred in the work of The Hague and Amsterdam Impressionists.

If unexceptional in subject matter and stylistic approach, this work shows considerable facility in handling the oil medium according to academic criteria for modelling in the round. Some guidance in this *genre* may have been provided by his father, whose only surviving painting is in fact a realistically conceived still life. However, independent study was probably Mondrian's primary source of training and still life subjects would readily lend themselves to this purpose. Also, a competence in this *genre* was required to pass the examination for secondary school drawing instructors which he took in September 1892 (Document no. 3), when *Jug and Onions* was dated. In a real sense, then, this work represents the culmination of approximately six years of self-training in Winterswijk. That Mondrian chose to send four still life paintings to his first public exhibition further indicates the confidence he felt in his professional qualifications even before his Academy training.

1893

Oil on canvas

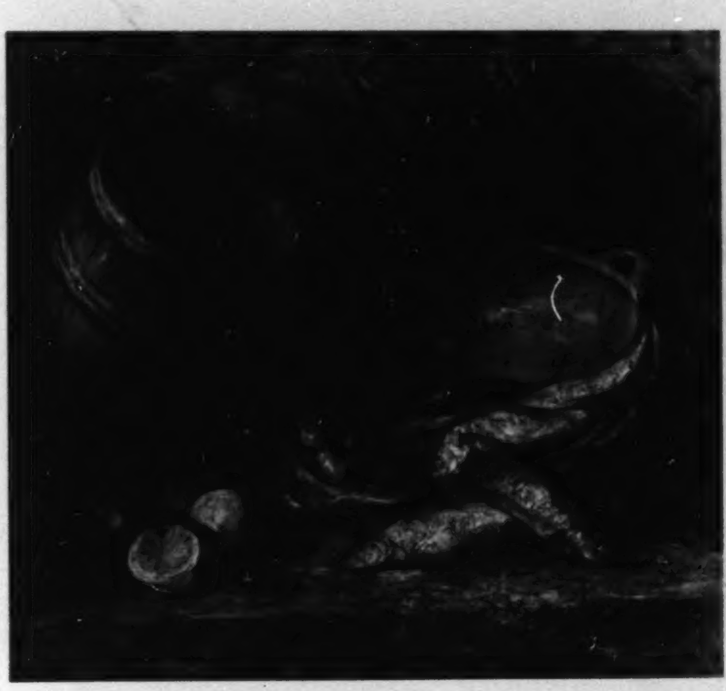
26 x 29-1/8 in., 66 x 74 cm.

Signed lower left:
P. C. MONDRIAAN Jr. 1/93

Provenance: ex collections
A. P. Koster and H. Rauch;
acquired by present
owner from Mrs E. A. Dissel via
C. F. van Dam, Beverwijk, 7 April 1960

Exhibitions: Utrecht 1893, no. 77;
New York 1945; Amsterdam 1946, no. 3

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam



6 Still Life: Herring

This work, Mondrian's only contribution to the *Kunstliefde* exhibition in 1893, is dated January 1893 and must have been executed shortly after his arrival in Amsterdam. His opportunities there to see examples of Dutch seventeenth-century and contemporary naturalistic still-life painting appear to have affected his approach. At least one newspaper critic of the Utrecht exhibition detected an advance in Mondrian's development, since he characterized this work as "much better than the many of the previous year" ("BAR" in the *Utrechtsche Courant*, 29 April 1893). He went on to mention the increased attention to more painterly effects of light and tonality, which indeed is apparent when this work is compared with *Jug and Onions* (no. 5). Nonetheless, it remains basically a work of objective naturalism, a fact emphasized by the somewhat mundane subject matter, herring, a favourite national dish. The barrel in which the herring are packed and the sieve used for sorting them, despite their apparently casual placement on the table, show the same studied interest in regular contours and plastic forms as *Jug and Onions*.

A slightly personal note of iconography may be present in the letters "A N" inscribed on the packing case seen above and behind the sieve. These terminal letters of his name may signify a personal identification with traditional Dutch subject matter or refer to his humble mode of living at that time. In any case, to describe the still-life works submitted by Mondrian to the *Kunstliefde* exhibitions of 1892 and 1893 as academic (see S: p. 46) is unfair, if that term implies a limitation on his desire for personal expression at the time.

7 Church seen from the Rear

The subject of this work has not yet been identified, but its objective naturalism points to a date early in the 1890's. The tree foliage, although more thinly painted, resembles that in *Woods with Stream* (no. 1). The placement of the church centrally in the composition has an arbitrary directness which is not equally characteristic of other contemporary or earlier works. The *plein-air* lighting, subject matter, and a certain ambivalence in the relative positions of some of the walls suggest a possible debt to Barbizon traditions and specifically to Corot, whose paintings of architectural subjects with "interlocked planes" (Herbert p. 87, no. 1) were available in the Netherlands by this time. The image of a church isolated in a landscape is frequent in earlier nineteenth-century painting (e.g. the more strictly Romantic works of Caspar David Friedrich and numerous Dutch Romantic artists). However, Mondrian's conception here is limited to a more objective realism even when compared with a number of his later renderings of similar themes (nos. 14, 49 and 57). The subject implies Mondrian's concern with the spiritual in art while granting his composition an inherent architectonic character.

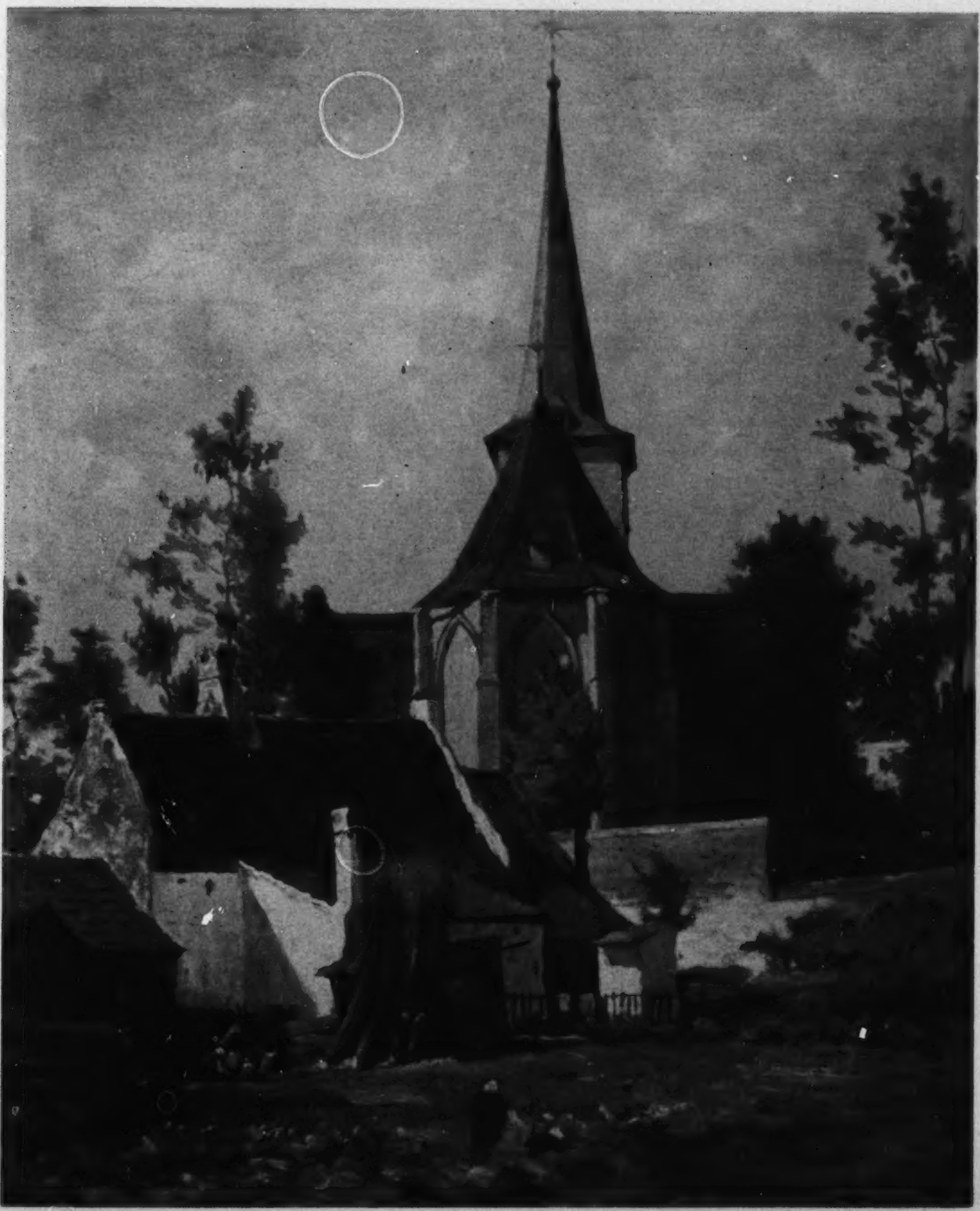
1892

Oil on canvas

23-5/8 x 19-7/16 in., 60 x 49.3 cm.

Signed lower right: P. MONDRIAAN

Provenance: ex collection
Mr R., Brussels; to present owner
1959
Mr J. P. Smid



8 Landscape with Stream

This is one of three known works which were signed "Pieter", the others being *Landscape with Irrigation Ditch* (GM: 2) and *Women washing Clothes* (no. 9). The use of this signature might be explained by Mondrian's wish that the painting not be attributed to his uncle Frits, who sometimes signed his first name in a manner easily mistaken for, or altered to, "Piet". The need for such clarification was no doubt greatest during the early 1890's, when Piet's landscape style was developing into a personal idiom but kept enough traces of his uncle's influence to make some confusion possible. A further indication that these three works were executed in the mid 1890's is the fact that in *Landscape with Irrigation Ditch* "Pieter" was superimposed upon an original "P.C. Mondriaan Jr.", a type of signature found in *Jug and Onions* (no. 5) and two other works dated 1891 and 1893.

The subject and style of *Landscape with Stream* show Mondrian's emergence from *retardataire* Romantic / Realist influences interspersed with occasional instruction by Frits in the tonal luminism of The Hague Impressionists. The subject recalls a report (see Lurasco) that "By preference Frits Mondriaan paints woodland views and scenes with water." This is one of the few naturalistic landscapes by Piet with a genuinely picturesque Barbizon setting. More and more he will tend to isolate a single element — water, field, trees, church, hayrick or farm building — as a dominant motif. Even here, the tree and its reflection along the central axis of the composition and the firm outline of the water's edge are typical habits of design recurring throughout Mondrian's naturalistic period. The forceful contour of the wedge of land protruding into the lower right corner functions structurally in both two and three dimensions and may be compared to similar aspects of the paintings in the *Kalfje* series of *circa* 1901 (e.g. GM: 11 and 12) and the *Duivendrecht* series of *circa* 1905 (e.g. nos. 28 and 29). The idiosyncratic composition of *Landscape with Stream* indicates the maturity and independence of Mondrian's artistic vision when he was probably not much older than twenty.

1894

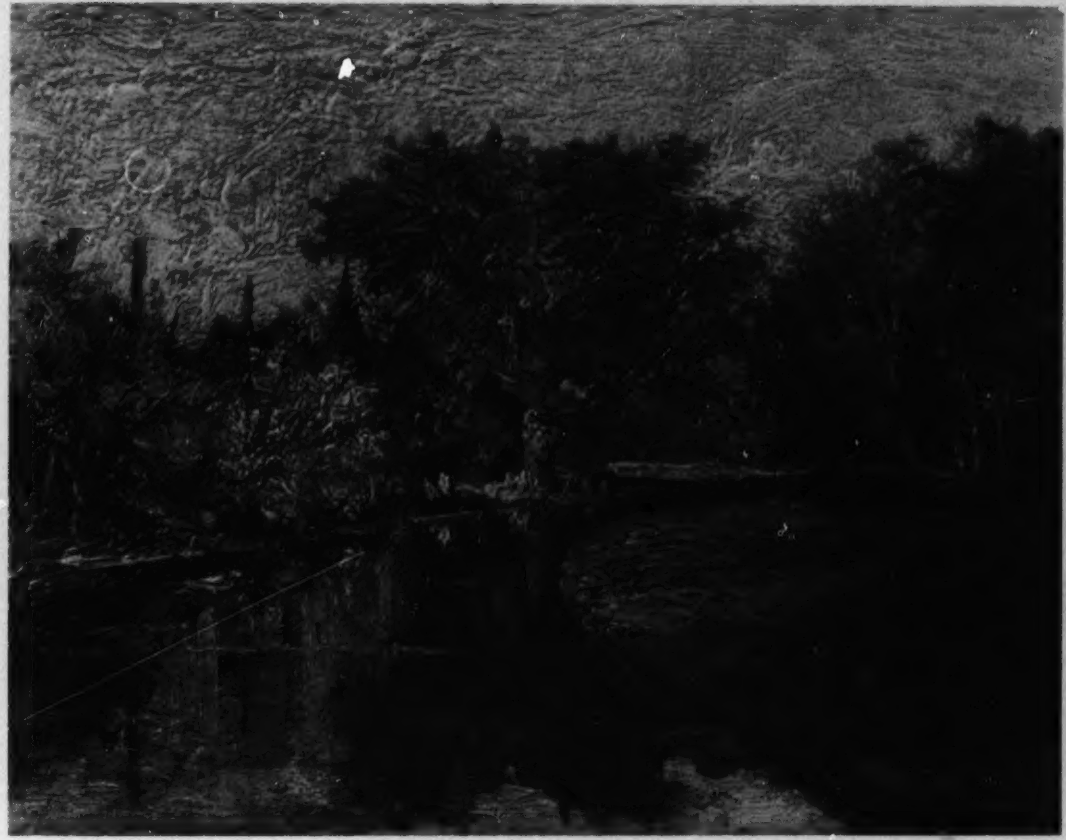
Oil on canvas (remounted)

11-1/4 x 14-9/16 in., 28.5 x 37 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIETER MONDRIAAN

Provenance: ex collection
J. C. Solleveld, Rijswijk;
acquired by present owner
at auction 1961

Private collection, Amsterdam



9 Women washing Clothes

This work is one of three bearing the full name "Pieter", a rather safe indication that it dates some time during the mid 1890's (see no. 8). Although the brownish colour scheme relates generally to *Landscape with Stream* (no. 8), a looser brush stroke reveals Mondrian's increasing interest in The Hague and Amsterdam Impressionist Schools. At first glance, the bucolic subject calls to mind the farmland settings of The Hague School, but the faceless figures suggest a conception made popular by George Breitner and Isaac Israels, in whose paintings of Amsterdam street scenes the sense of figural bulk and portrait accuracy is similarly denied. In Mondrian's own work the relatively large scale of these figures *vis-à-vis* the landscape is exceptional. This further supports a date in the latter half of the 1890's, when Mondrian was finishing his studies at the Amsterdam Academy and was still involved with the problems of figural composition taught there. Apart from these various school influences, the stabilizing effect of the right-angled door frame can be paralleled in much of Mondrian's early work and, of course, anticipates a major aspect of his later compositional practices.

1896

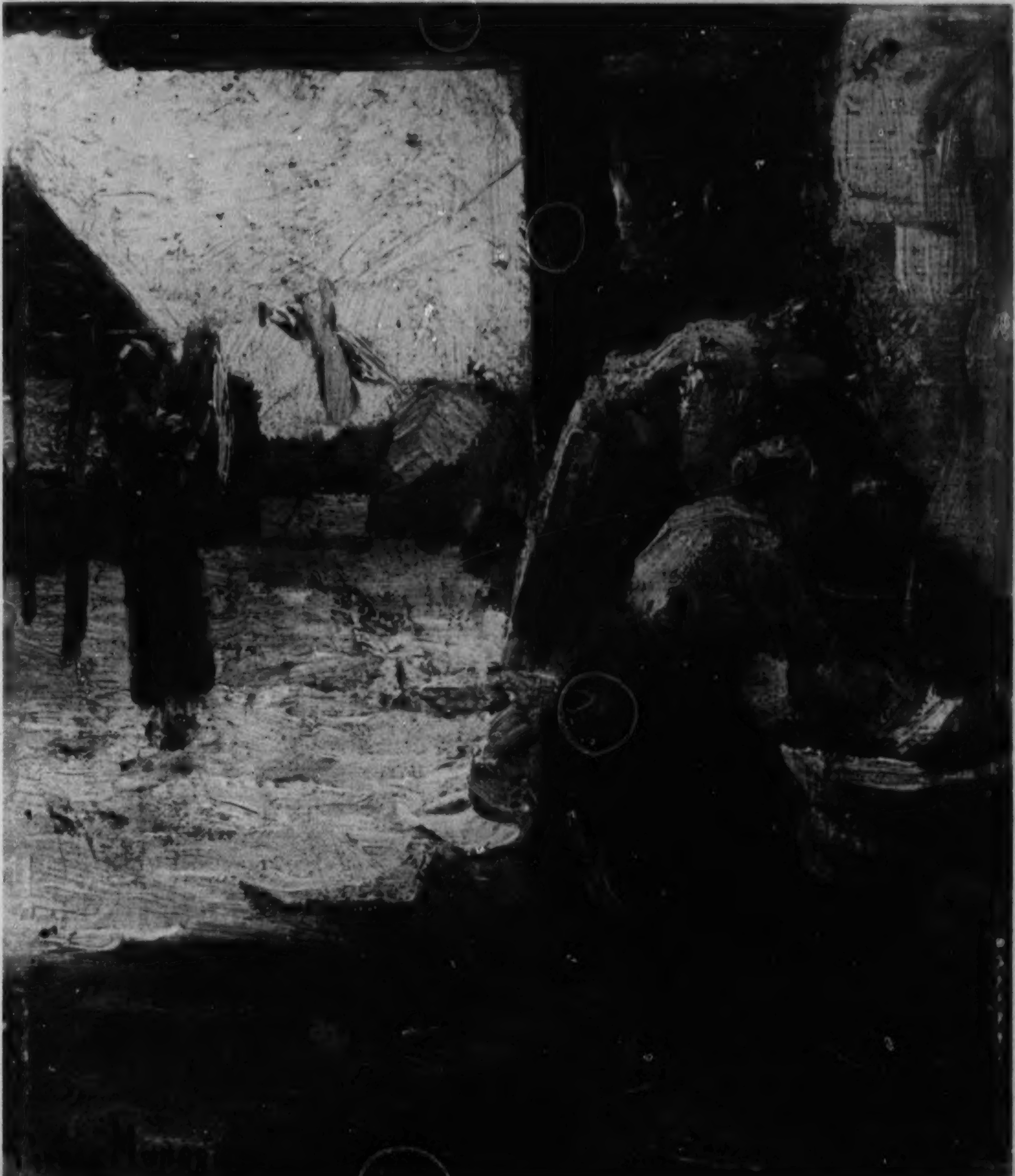
Oil on canvas

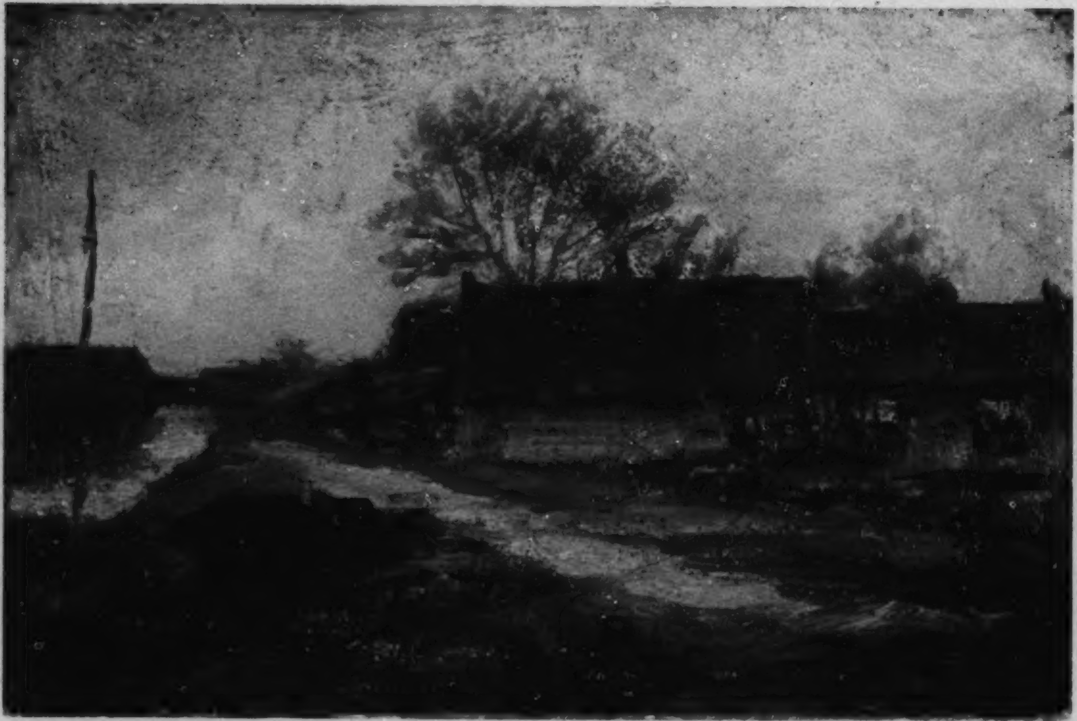
11-3/8 x 9-3/8 in., 28.8 x 23.8 cm.

Signed lower left:
PIETER MONDRIAAN

Provenance: formerly owned by Sonneveld family of Middelburg, Zeeland; acquired *circa* 1956 at public auction by present owner

Mr G. J. den Heeten





10 Landscape with Houses and Canal

This work relates closely in style and brush technique to several landscapes which may be dated in the mid or late 1890's (GM: 2). The subject matter, interest in atmospheric lighting and greyish tonalized colour scheme illustrate Mondrian's full adoption of Hague Impressionist precepts for a major part of his early landscapes. Moreover, there is nothing hesitant about the broken, yet fluid, brush-work. Compositional stability is achieved by placing the buildings on an axis parallel to the picture plane as an extension of the horizon line. Although one supposes that it was executed *en plein air*, it does not have the appearance of a quick sketch. It shows instead the sophistication with which Mondrian, at an early age, transformed the picturesque manner of The Hague School into his own more structural approach.

circa 1897

Oil on canvas (remounted)

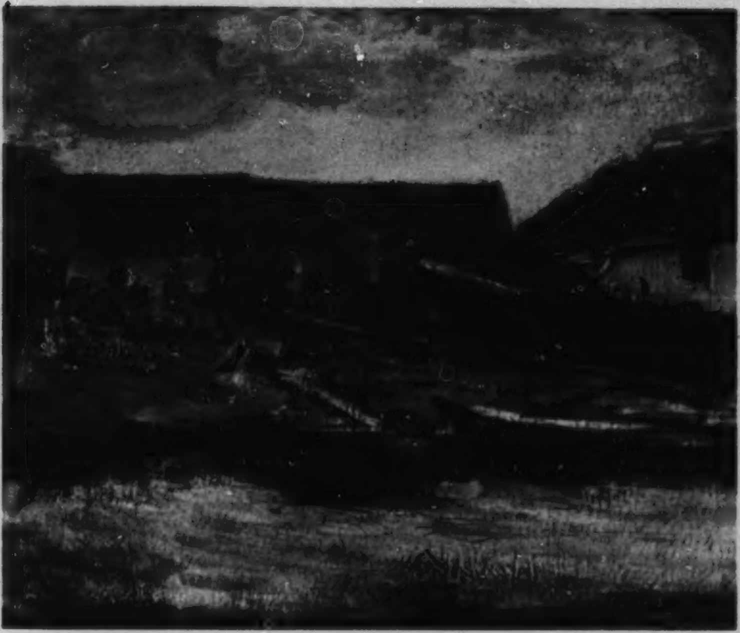
13-3/8 x 20-1/2 in., 34 x 52 cm.

Signed lower right: Piet Mondriaan

Provenance: ex collection Mrs F.;
to present owner 1962

Art Gallery "Monet"

11 Shipworks



1898

Oil on canvas

12-1/4 x 14-5/8 in., 31 x 37 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN

Provenance: acquired by present owner from auction at Mak van Waay, Amsterdam, *circa* 1951

Exhibitions: The Hague 1955, no. 4

G. J. Nieuwenhuizen Segaar
Art Gallery

An identification of this painting as the *Scheepstimmerwerf* exhibited in Amsterdam in late 1898 and early 1899 has been suggested by C. Blok (GM: p. 18) since, while ships were a common subject for Mondrian throughout his naturalistic period, this is the only painting which exactly conforms to the title *Shipworks*. This identification is supported by a newspaper reference to *Scheepstimmerwerf* (unsigned review of fall *Arti* exhibition, *Arnhemshe Courant,* 9 September 1898), in which Mondrian is praised as the most promising exhibitor among his "young colleagues" and the work itself is described as follows:

Without risking [the use of] unusual colour effects or affectedness in the draughtsmanship, there rests over his painting a tone of careful but straightforward observation which holds him back from a more exuberant realism as manifested, for example, in Breitner; the Golden Way, which leads so many painters into a morass of banality, has been trodden by Mondrian with success.

Mr A. P. van den Briel, who became Mondrian's friend shortly after this date, recalls that Mondrian often painted such subjects in the areas of Amsterdam known as the *Schinkelbuurt* and the *Nieuwe Meer.* Although the industrial subject matter may owe a certain debt to George Breitner as the reviewer implied, Mondrian's setting in pre-industrial Amsterdam, and his Impressionist brush-work and *plein-air approach,* are more indebted to The Hague School than to Breitner.

In colouring and general style, this work is very close to *Landscape with Houses and Canal* (no. 10). In both works the picturesque randomness of the scene is given compositional stability by the inclusion of a block-like structure set parallel to the picture plane along the horizontal axis. This compositional device was not common in The Hague School, but was often found in Breitner's scenes of Amsterdam façades, although Mondrian gives it only a subsidiary importance here.

12 Drydock at Durgerdam

This is a second version of an oil sketch on cardboard (GM: 14) which, like *Shipworks* (no. 11), represents an important aspect of Mondrian's style in the 1890's, when a basically Impressionist brush-work was combined with the darker, brownish tones of the Amsterdam School. The setting (fig. 1) can be identified by the square building with the cupola seen in the upper right, a seventeenth-century Protestant church known today as *de Kapel*, although by Mondrian's time it had been converted to a schoolhouse and a private residence. Apart from its picturesque and topographical interest, Mondrian's personal contribution is most strongly felt in the massive scale given to the central image of the boat, a quality which anticipates *Steamboat Moored Along the Amstel* (no. 44) of *circa* 1908.

1898?

Water colour on paper

17-3/4 x 24 in., 45 x 61 cm.

Signed lower right:
Piet Mondriaan

Provenance: in possession of family
of present owner since early
in this century

Mme Cuvelier

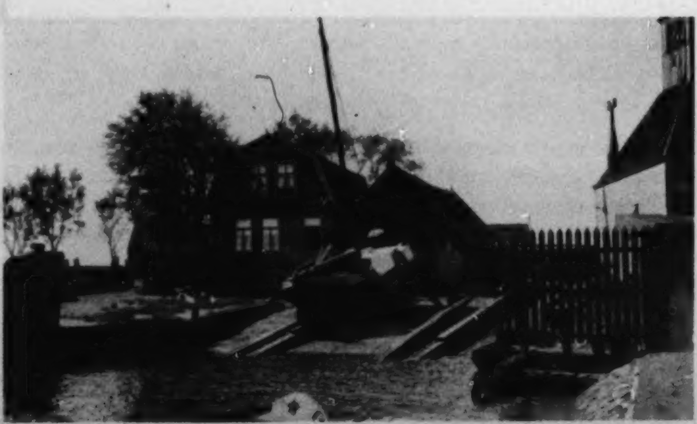
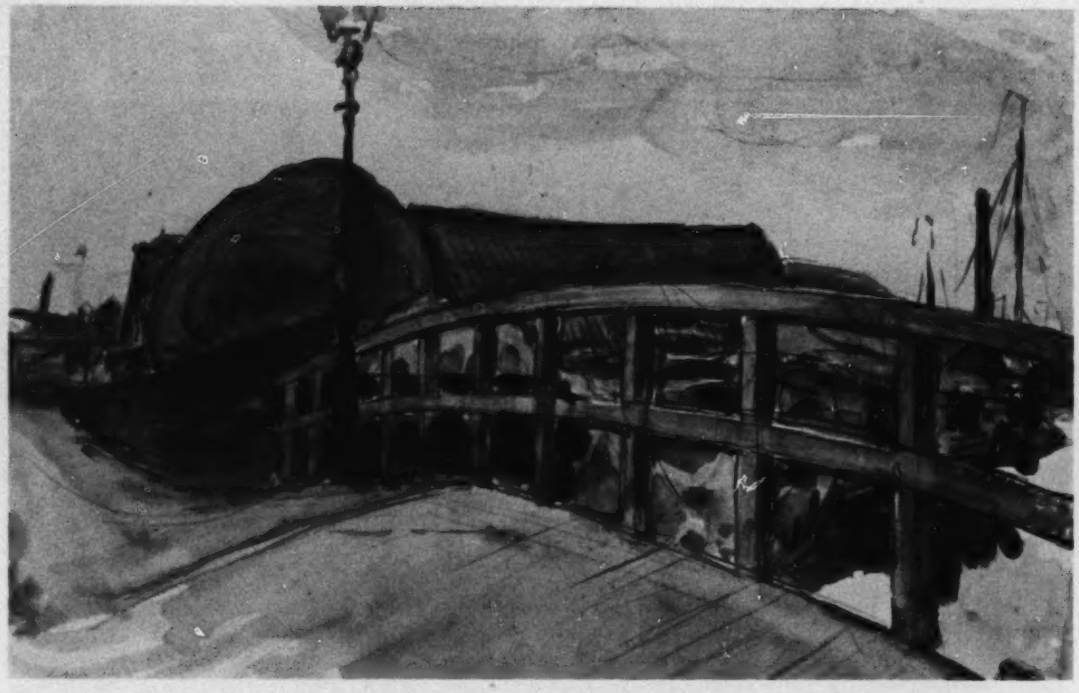


figure 1



13 Canal Bridge

The flowing wash technique derives from water colours by the leading Hague and Amsterdam Impressionists (e.g. the Maris brothers; Anton Mauve; George Breitner; and, perhaps closest to Mondrian in technique and subject, J. H. Weissenbruch).

The setting was probably one of the less built-up areas on the outskirts of Amsterdam, but Mondrian was less interested in exact topography than in the non-industrialized milieu characterized by a canal, a wooden bridge, ship masts, haystacks and windmill, although the smokestacks seen to the rear suggest that Mondrian was not unaware of the impending disappearance of such traditional Dutch views.

Despite its descriptive naturalism, this water colour involves a sophisticated stylization of normal perspective. A comparison with a recently discovered crayon drawing of the same setting (fig. 2)—which is attributed to Mondrian mainly because of the coincidence of subject—indicates, in the wide-angle rendering of the foreground bridge, a subtle influence from contemporary *Art Nouveau* design. Several other drawings, which can be dated in the same period, also involve minor distortions of normal perspective, and traces of this type of stylization recur in Mondrian's art for some time to come.

1896?

Water colour on blue paper

16 x 24-7/16 in., 40.5 x 62 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance:
ex collection Dr J. F. S. Esser

Private collection, Paris

←

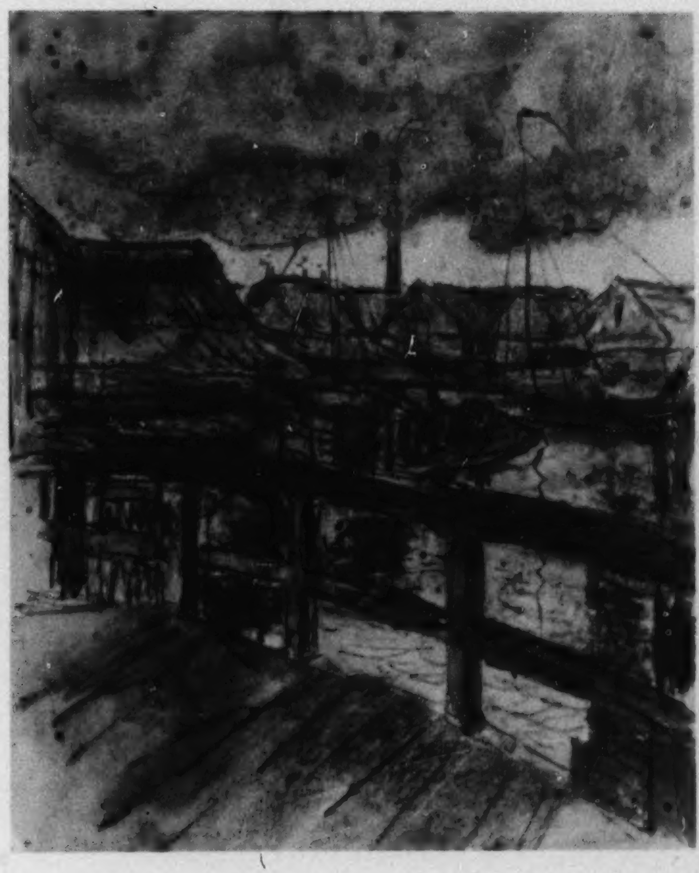


figure 2

14 Reformed Church at Winterswijk

There are only two known proofs of this etching. Indeed, the attribution of a work in this medium to Mondrian would seem unlikely, were it not for the existence of a more highly finished signed version of the same subject in gouache (fig. 3), and the fact that the subject can be identified as the village church of the town in which Mondrian lived between the ages of eight and twenty. Although Mondrian's family did not worship there, since his father preferred a more orthodox Calvinist church, it can be seen directly from the back yard of the Mondrian home. Since the gouache version was almost certainly the *Dorpskerk* in the *Arti* exhibition of May 1898 ("Giovanni" [pseudonym for J. Kalff], *Algemeen Handelsblad,* 5 June 1898, spoke of "P. Mondriaan with his mass of tree branches thrown together like spiders' feet"), a comparable date for the etching is probable. The etching conforms in all details — of course in reverse — to a preparatory drawing for the finished gouache (private collection, Paris) to the extent of including only a single tree at one side of the composition, whereas the finished gouache includes a second tree at the right which completes the somewhat Gothic arch-like arbour through which the church can be viewed at some distance. This type of imagery again reflects a nineteenth-century Romantic tradition leading back at least as far as *Church of Eldena* by Friedrich, but the conception here is less specifically fraught with overtones of Romantic *Weltangst* and a mediaevalizing fascination with the past and human mortality. It combines a degree of stylization and symbolism in the vein of Jan Toorop and Floris Verster with a more naive realism reminiscent of *Church seen from the Rear* (no. 7). This visual analysis is supported by a brief poem, inscribed and signed by Mondrian on the reverse side of the gouache, which reads in translation:

«*And the branches of the young trees*
ascended joyfully
until they joined together with
[the branches of] the large trees already
hanging down in rest from the grey sky,
and beneath the silent green surface —
and the church rose high out above the village.»

This quasi-descriptive, quasi-symbolist literary content in the poem reflects quite accurately the mixture of naturalism and symbolism in the visual style of the work.

Finally, although etching was listed as part of the curriculum at the Art Academy in Amsterdam, there seems to have been no actual practice there in this medium. The two known etchings (a single pull of a realistic *Girl with Bonnet* is in the S. B. Slijper collection) probably represent Mondrian's independent efforts to acquire some proficiency in the medium, whose increasing popularity towards the end of the nineteenth century was in keeping with the graphic orientation of one movement in Dutch art at that time, as illustrated in the work of Toorop, Verster and the artist-critic, Jan Veth.

1898

Etching

14 x 10 in., 35.5 x 25.3 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: ex collections
Dr J. F. S. Esser(?) and
S. B. Slijper

Mr and Mrs Carl H. Gans

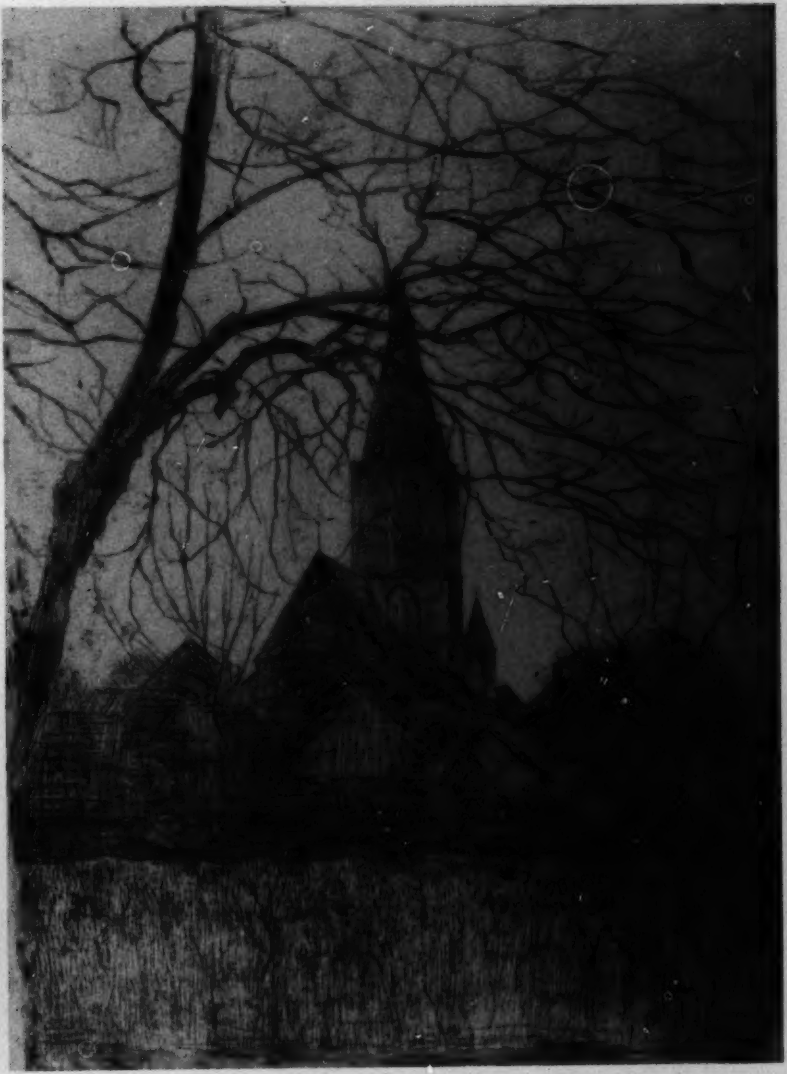
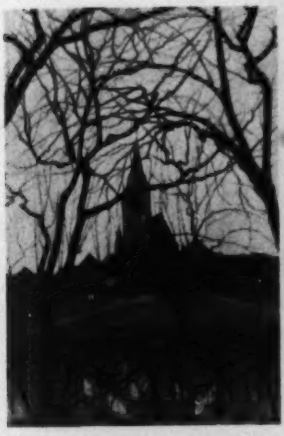


figure 3



15 Spring Idyll

1900

Oil on canvas

29-9/16 x 25-1/4 in., 75 x 64 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN

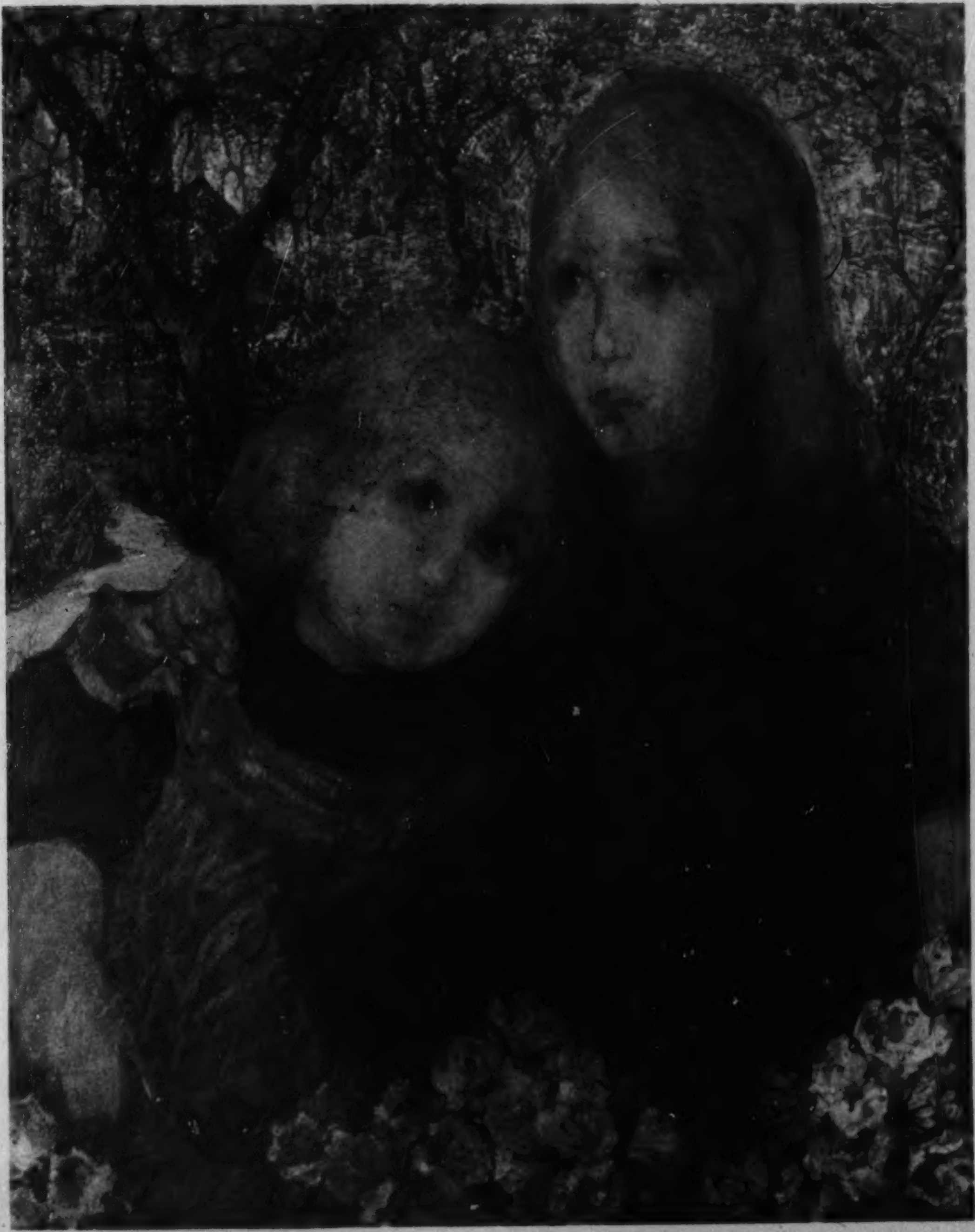
Provenance: acquired by present owner *circa* 1940 in Amsterdam

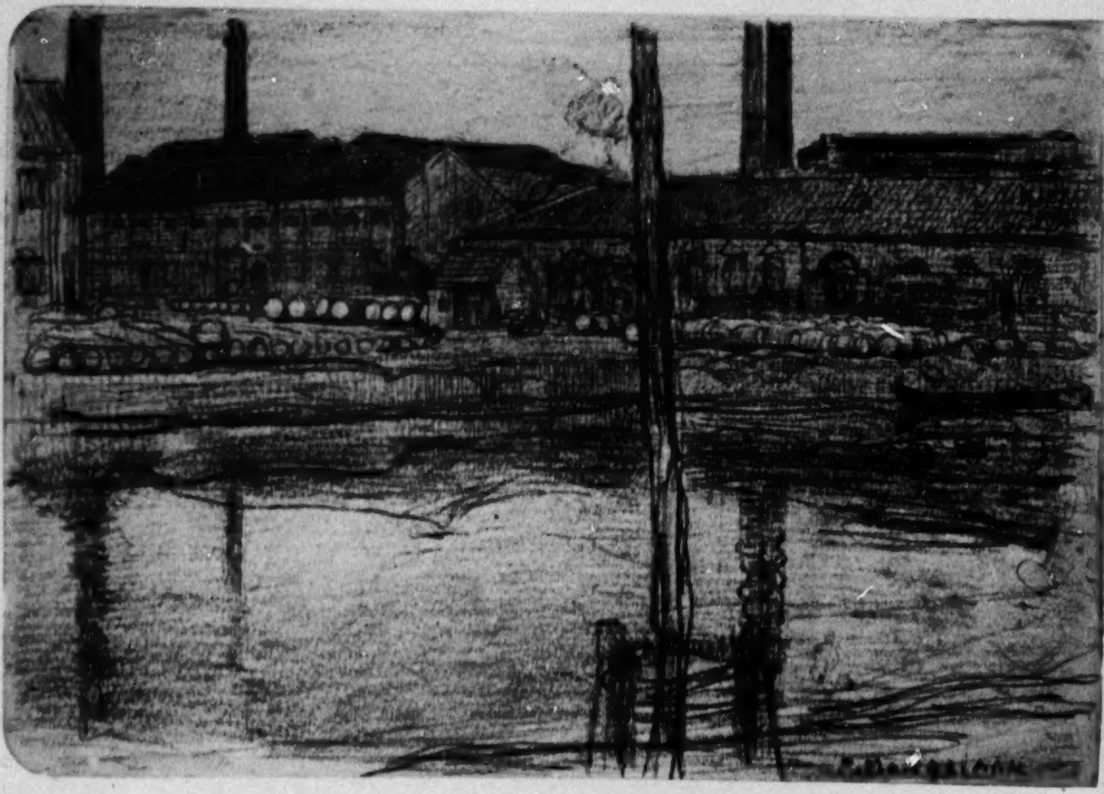
Exhibitions: Amsterdam 1901, no. 101

Mrs I. J. Bantzinger-Wiedenhoff

This work can be identified as the *Lente Idylle* in the *St. Lucas* exhibition in the spring of 1901, since this title is inscribed in pencil on the reverse of the frame. Moreover, in subject and style it is very close to *Kindje* (GM: 10), a second figure subject in the same exhibition, perhaps depicting one of the girls in *Spring Idyll.* Both works were described by a newspaper critic *(Prov. Groninger Courant,* 15 June 1901) as being in the tradition of Thijs Maris and Jan Toorop, indicating correctly Mondrian's best known Dutch predecessors in Symbolist representations of idealized girlish portraits (see James p. 107).

Despite its date, approximately two years later than *Reformed Church at Winterswijk* (no. 14), this pseudo-portrait combines a similar naturalism of style and quasi-symbolic content. The naive symbolism of youthful faces turned upwards in open-eyed expressions of wonder and the equally naive inclusion of spring rhododendrons in the foreground indicate that such concepts were more common to Mondrian at the turn of the century than has previously been realized. In the background at the upper left, a church seen behind a grid of tree branches further links this work to *Reformed Church at Winterswijk,* since its outlines suggest that it was the same church. Although not nearly as stylized or radical in colour as several idealized female figures of *circa* 1907-08 (e.g. GM: 67 to 71), certainly *Spring Idyll* and *Kindje,* along with a third similar work now at the Sidney Janis Gallery, adumbrate Mondrian's later return to this more tentative figural symbolism. Strangely, a work usually dated in the later period, the drawing *Rhododendrons* of *circa* 1908 (GM: 105), suggests that Mondrian has there taken a motif from the earlier period and treated it on a grander scale and with a more expressive draughtsmanship, while not departing from the basic naturalism and formal arrangement of the flowers in *Spring Idyll.*





This relatively small drawing probably represents the same Royal Wax Candle Factory which appears in two oil paintings (e.g. S: c.c. 37), although the building complex is seen from a different angle in the paintings. Their compositional interest in four vertical smoke stacks with their reflected extensions in the water again stresses how much Mondrian was preoccupied with formal considerations in composing even works on a small scale. The actual factory (fig. 4) was located across from Mondrian's residence near the Rijksmuseum at Ruysdaelkade 75, Amsterdam, where he lived from April 9 to August 16, 1895 (see Terpstra p. 338). While the draughtsmanship at first strikes one as relatively sober in its naturalism, as do its finely felt gradations of light and shadow, a certain flowing quality to some of the lines again suggests a slight influence of *Art Nouveau*. A date towards the end of the 1890's is further confirmed by A. P. van den Briel, who originally owned one oil version and testifies that both his and the second oil version were executed by the turn of the century at the latest.

1899

Crayon drawing on paper

7-1/2 x 10-5/8 in., 19 x 27 cm.

Signed lower right: P. MONDRIAAN.

Provenance: ex collection
Mrs v/d H.-L.; to present owner *circa* 1963

Mr J. P. Smid

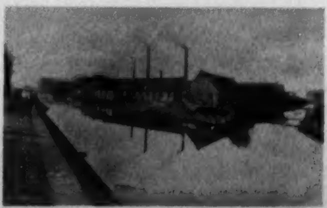
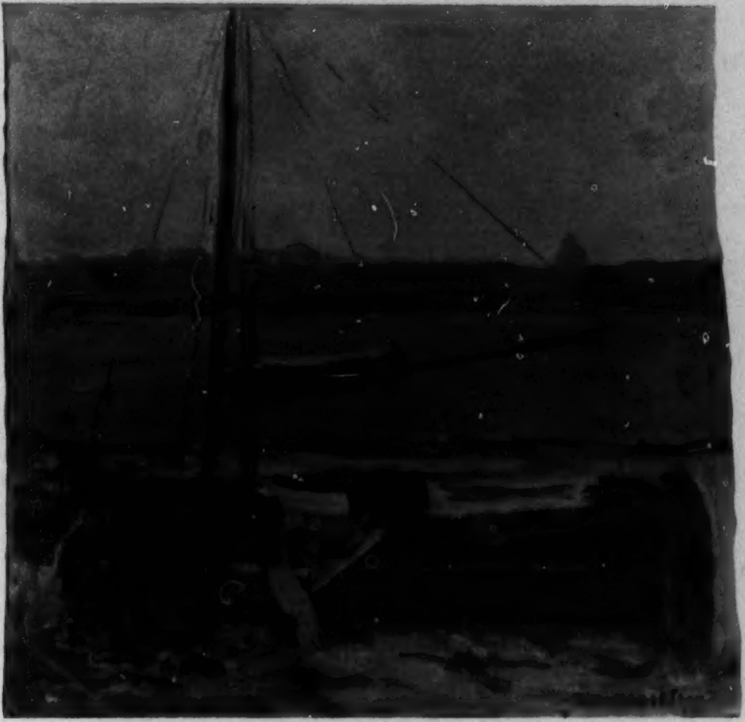


figure 4

16
Factory
←

17
Landscape with Boat
→



1901

Oil on canvas (remounted)

12-1/2 x 12-3/4 in., 31.7 x 32.3 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN.

Provenance: ex collection
S. B. Slijper; to present owner 1965

Private collection, New York

With its sparse structure, dry, thin brush-work and use of uniformly unsaturated colours, this work relates closely to several of the *Kalfje* series of landscapes with open fields, irrigation canals and foreground trees (e.g. GM: 11 and 12), as well as to the drawing *Factory* (no. 16). Another version (fig. 5) is reminiscent of the Impressionism of the mid 1890's, which clearly carried over into the earlier years of the next century as well. Both have a similar compositional structure in which the ship is strictly parallel to the picture plane and the successive planes of water and flat meadow landscape recede into the background.

A second feature which this work shares with several others of the period *circa* 1900-02 (e.g. S: ill. p. 49, c.c. 41) is its relatively high horizon line. From a short distance, the ground plane seems tipped up at an angle which jeopardizes the viewer's sense of perspective, although from a greater distance the ground plane falls into a normal perspective system and enhances the illusion of a deeply receding space.

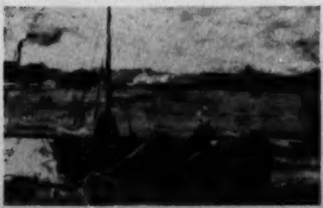


figure 5

18 Chrysanthemum

7

This is the earliest datable example of many studies of single flowers which Mondrian continued to produce until the mid 1920's. The exacting descriptive detail of the flower's stem and petals is rather strikingly formalized by the extreme frontality and flattening-out of the total image. The somewhat dry or pale colour may be seen as another manifestation of the sober repression of Impressionist lighting effects which characterizes the *Kalfje* series of approximately the same date. This frontal positioning of the flower is repeated in numerous later versions of this subject throughout many variations of style. Its use here attests to the effect which the imagery and stylistic stringencies of the Symbolist and *Art Nouveau* movements had on Mondrian's art at the turn of the century. It has been suggested (James pp. 107-8) that Mondrian's use of the chrysanthemum has overtones of human mortality as found in the literary Symbolist tradition, for example in Maeterlinck. This identification, however, seems less plausible in the Netherlands ~~than in the~~ Roman Catholic cultures of Mediterranean countries and Belgium, where the chrysanthemum is traditionally associated with funerals. Its use by Mondrian in connection with the festive celebration of the young Queen's marriage testifies that with it Mondrian could just as easily suggest overtones of life-giving vitality. Into it could even be read a symbolism of moral uprightness, dignity and sturdiness which are qualities appropriate to the context for which this work was, if not necessarily rendered, at least put to service.

1901

Water colour on paper

15-1/8 x 7-5/8 in., 38.3 x 19.3 cm.

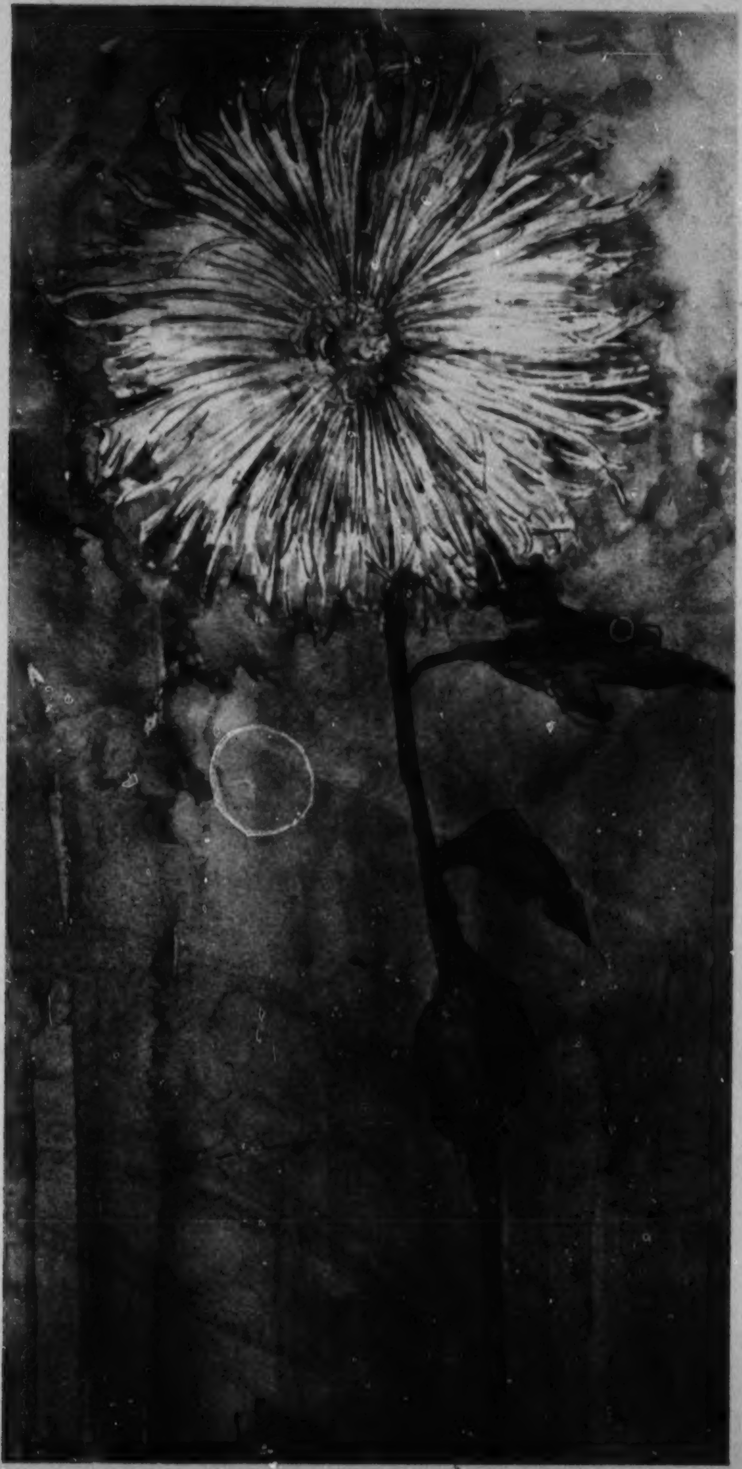
Signed lower left: PIET MONDRIAAN
also *Piet Mondriaan (Chrysant)*
in pencil on reverse

Provenance: one of one hundred and seventy-three water colours presented on 7 March 1901, by the membership of *Arti*, to Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands on the occasion of her marriage

Exhibitions:

Paris 1960-61, no. 1053 (not exhibited and there wrongly dated 1902)

Her Majesty
the Queen of the Netherlands



19 House on the Gein

This patiently executed tonal water colour is one of several renditions of a farmhouse façade seen frontally and located centrally in the composition (e.g. S: c.c. 98, and another version of the same subject seen from a slightly different angle, but executed in a similarly precise technique, Basel 1964-65, no. 3). Not only does the date on the water colour provide important documentation for the period, but the year 1741 which appears in the form of iron tie-rods on the brick façade allows us to indentify this structure as the present number 76 Gein North. About this time, Mondrian seems to have begun visiting the area of the Gein River, probably because of his friendship with the son of the painter Willem Maris. Simon Maris had just returned to Amsterdam from study abroad and begun painting along the Gein and near the village of Weesp. Although scarcely notable for an adventurous technique, this work documents Mondrian's interest *circa* 1900 in formally constructed modes of composition, whether the motif is a building façade, a single flower, or a simple landscape view. Both its relation to the artistic sphere of Amsterdam and its uniqueness of structure become apparent when it is compared to treatments of similar subjects by Eduard Karsen (see Hammacher ill. 46 and Terpstra p. 50, n. 5).

1900

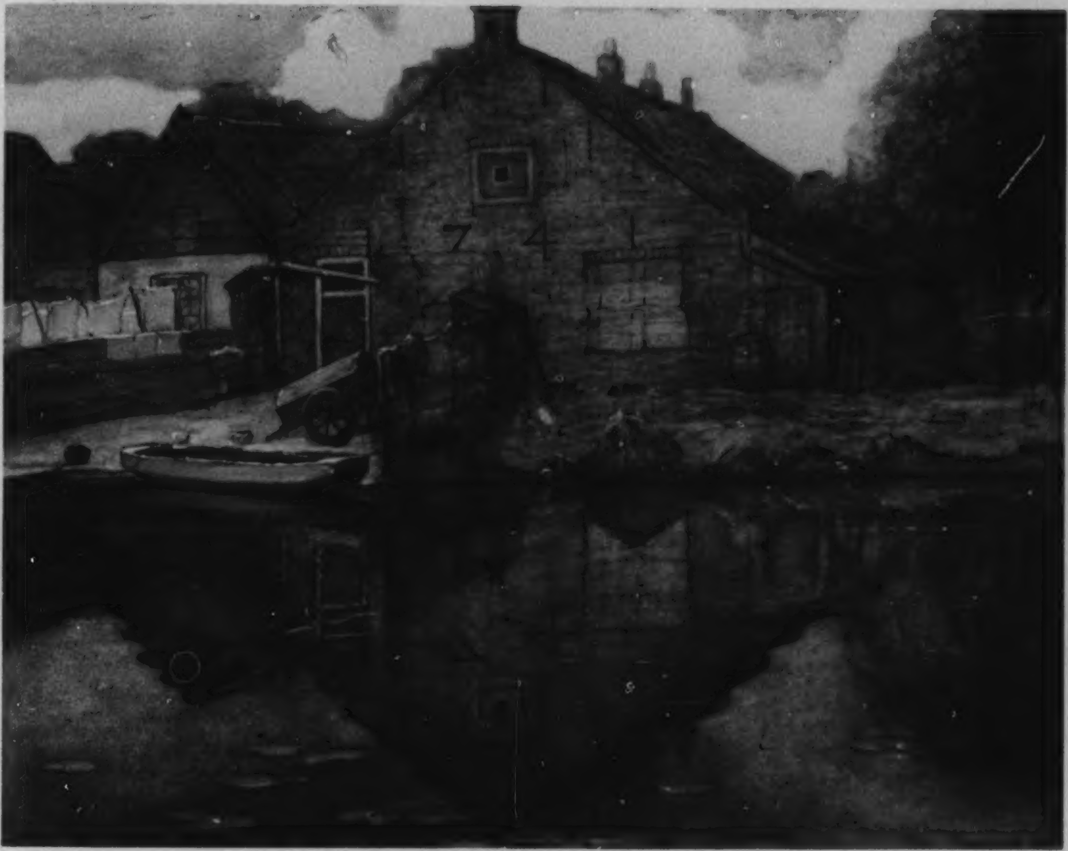
Water colour on paper

18-1/8 x 22-1/2 in., 46 x 57 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN. 1900.

Provenance: acquired *circa* 1910 by
Jan Spaan, then a member of *Arti;*
inherited January 1929 by his son,
the present owner

Mr Henri Spaan



20 House on the Gein

This is a third version of *House on the Gein* (no. 19). The looser brush-work gives it the appearance of a *plein-air* oil sketch, but the striking use of the mirror image of the building reflected in the water indicates that it was not executed merely as a preparatory sketch for either of the more finished versions. Neither is it possible to determine whether this version was executed before or after the others, since Mondrian often treated a single motif in a variety of compositional and expressive modes, not all of which could have been antecedent to the final version. Despite its brush-work and because of a keyed-down colour scale and formal structure, this work also relates to the *Kalfje* series and other similar works of the turn of the century. Although it would be incorrect to see this work as a conscious prognosis of the diamond compositions of Mondrian's abstract period, beginning *circa* 1917 and carrying through to *Victory Boogie Woogie* (S: ill. p. 191 and c.c. 425) of the New York period, its general contours do anticipate this particular compositional motif.

1900

Oil on canvas

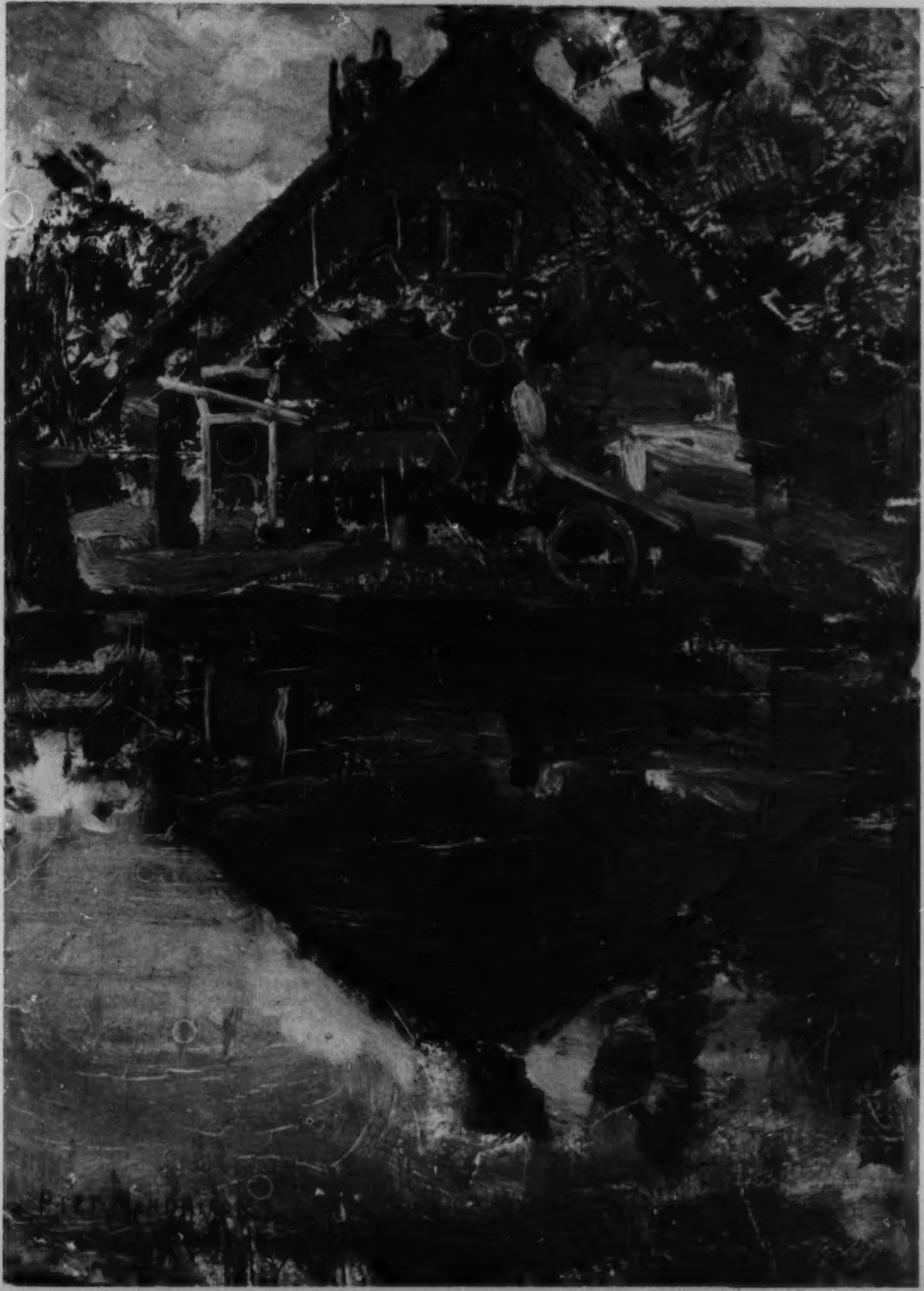
16-1/2 x 12-1/4 in., 41.8 x 31 cm.

Signed lower left: PIET MONDRIAAN

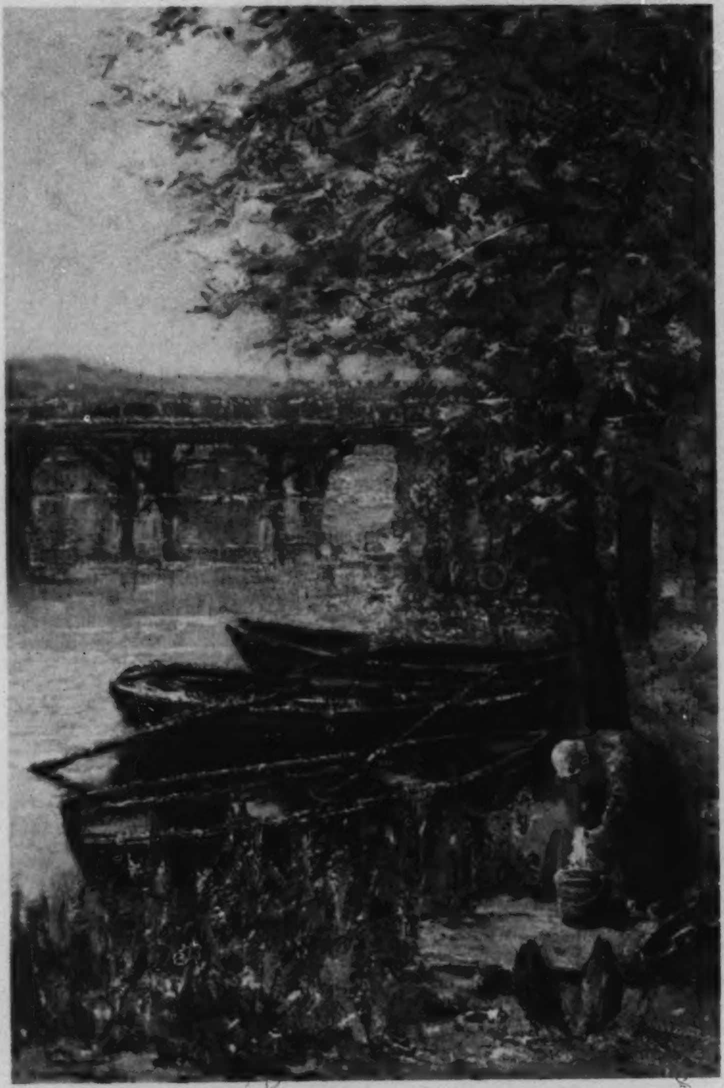
Provenance:

S. B. Slijper collection *circa* 1919

Mr and Mrs Carl H. Gans



21 Vinken Bridge at Diemen



1902

Oil on canvas

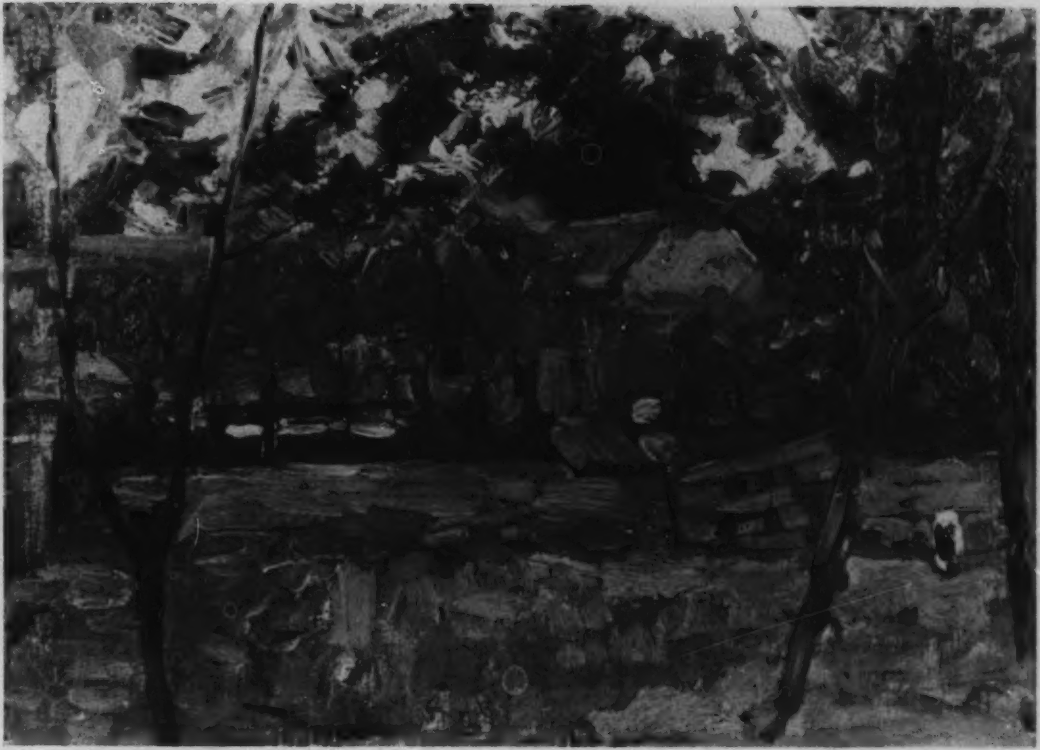
21-1/2 x 14-1/4 in., 52 x 36.1 cm.

Signed lower left:
PIET MONDRIAAN 1902.

Provenance: ex private collection in Amsterdam; to present owner at Parke Bernet 27 March 1963 (cat. 2181, no. 67 as *Landscape near Vinkeveen*)

Mr and Mrs Leon L. Gildesgame

The setting of this work is identified by a written inscription on the stretcher, *Vinkenbrug bij Diemen*, which denotes a now replaced bridge located a few miles to the south-east of Amsterdam. In both subject and style the painting is clearly indebted to The Hague Impressionists and specifically recalls the facile brush-work and corruscating foliage surfaces found in the painting of Willem Maris, whose influence had already been seen in a work of *circa* 1898 (GM: 6). The high degree of detail and finish and the fact that it is dated suggest that it was either commissioned or intended for public exhibition. The execution is fresh and unlaboured nonetheless. With the solid horizontal accent of the bridge Mondrian lends a typical emphasis on structure to an otherwise picturesquely conceived setting.



22 Farmyard

1902

Oil on canvas

11-15/16 x 17 in., 30.3 x 43 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: acquired early in
the century directly from the artist
by N. Posthumus Meyjes;
to present owner *circa* 1963

Dr F. C. Valentien

Although the exact setting is not identifiable, topographical features of this farm suggest the general locale of the river Gein. A typical view past foreground trees into the distance is here quite impressionistically rendered. Stylistically the work can be understood as a more freely sketched treatment of a subject similar in type and execution to the relatively detailed *Vinken Bridge at Diemen* (no. 21). The charm of this piece is due to the combination of improvised flashes of light and colouring which after longer viewing do not destroy Mondrian's underlying sense of realism and compositional structure, a sense based here on a strong feeling for the open hollowed-out spatial ambient bound firmly by the foreground flanking trees and the background foliage and barnyard buildings.

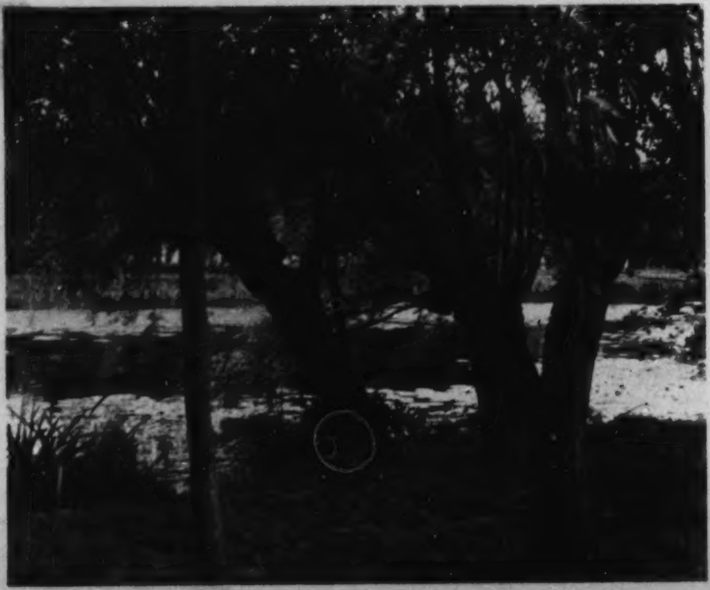
23 Pollard Willows

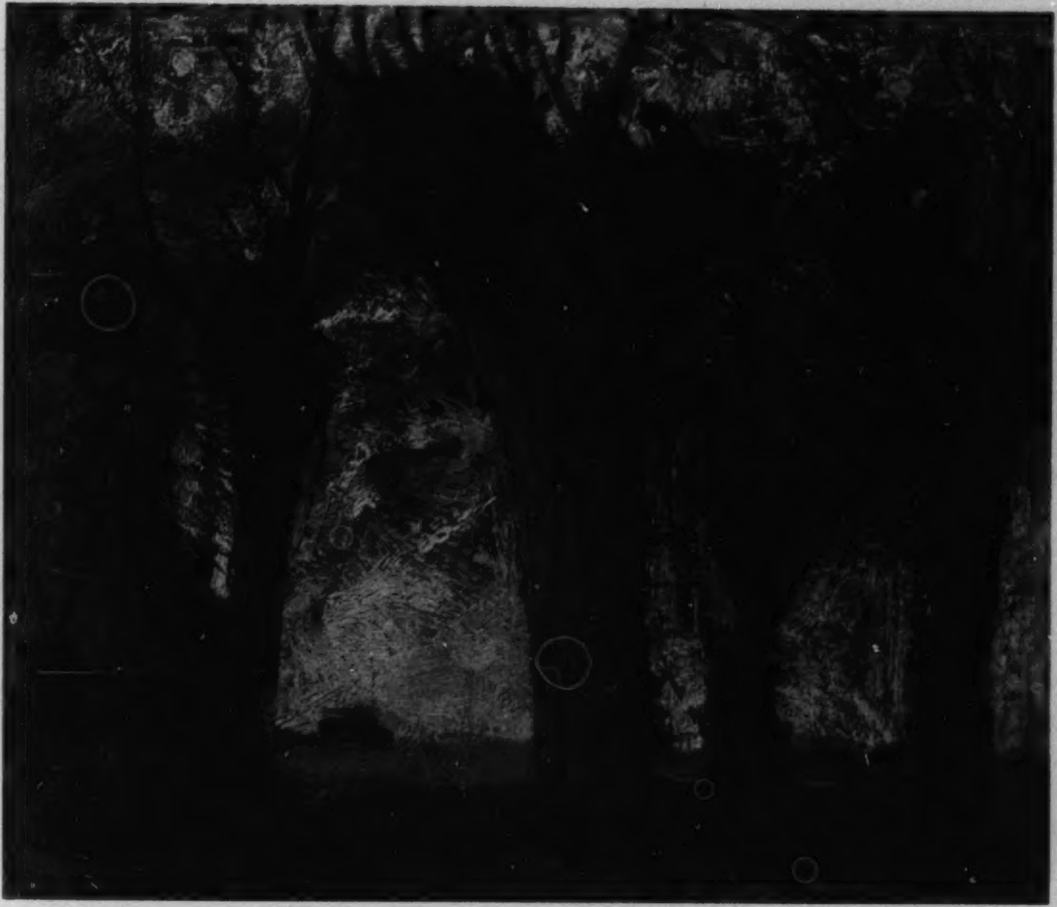
This is one of six or more versions of essentially the same subject (e.g. S: c.c. 78 to 82). Two of these were in an exhibition in 1907, but for most an earlier date can be assumed on the basis of style. The present example seems to combine the Impressionist brush technique found in *Vinken Bridge at Diemen* (no. 21) and *Farmyard* (no. 22) with an emphasis on the powerful expressive contours of the pollard willow.

Particularly notable here is the massive, almost monumental scale of the central foreground tree which serves as a *repoussoir,* past which the viewer can see into a not too clearly defined distance. Its plastic contours nonetheless do not separate it from the spatial ambient of which it remains an organic part. In this respect it should be considered essentially the product of an Impressionist rather than an Expressionist approach, having little in common with van Gogh's use of similar subjects.

The accompanying photograph (fig. 6) shows a grove of willows along the Gein located obliquely across from the De Vink café where Mondrian, together with his friends Simon Maris and Albert Hulshoff-Pol, stayed while working in that area. Although the grove is not demonstrably the exact setting of the series, this possibility should not be ruled out, since an equally dense grove of willows is difficult to find there, and judging from other Gein subjects done in series it is apparent that Mondrian's settings were usually found very close to his place of lodging. At the very least, the photograph indicates to what degree Mondrian was still dependent upon a specific subject in nature for his inspiration and to what extent the play of light over foliage remained a basic preoccupation in his art.

figure 6





circa 1903

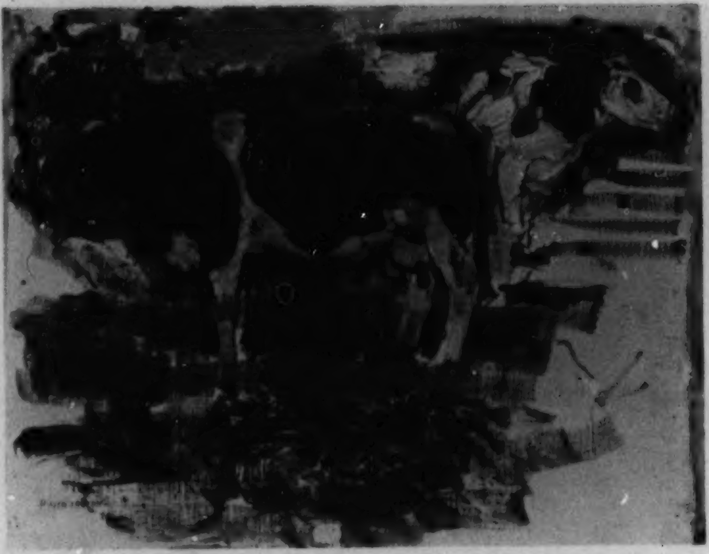
Oil on canvas

10 x 11-3/4 in., 25.3 x 29.8 cm.

Signed lower left: PIET MONDRIAAN

Provenance: B. L. Voskuil,
a fine art dealer in Amsterdam;
inherited by the art critic
Jan D. Voskuil, The Hague;
to present owner 1960

Private collection, Amsterdam



1904

Oil on cardboard

15-3/4 x 19 in., 40 x 48.2 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN

Provenance:
collection Mr and Mrs Simon Maris
from 1919; to J. Winterink,
Amsterdam, 1959; to Gallery "Monet",
Amsterdam, 1960; to present owner 1961

Sidney Janis Gallery

→

24 Study of Cows

This unfinished oil sketch is similar in compositional interest and execution to two studies of a cow (GM: 24 and a second version in the S. B. Slijper collection). Mr van den Briel feels that all were painted in 1904 when Mondrian visited the *Ossental* south of Tilburg along the Belgian frontier.

This work is part of a series of similar subjects and may be considered, in principle, a rearranged detail of the oil painting *Cows Grazing* (S: ill. p. 216, c.c. 86), which could have been the painting *Grazend Kalfjes,* no. 359 of the exhibition *Levende Meesters* at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, September 1903. In both works Mondrian's concern is as much for compositional balance as for naturalistic illusionism, a fact corroborated by the suggestion of the mirror image of the cow reflected in the foreground water in the large painting and also hinted at in the smaller study. Both are executed in a painterly Impressionist style, and yet the high horizon and the sparse rendering of sky and landscape reflect some residual influence from the *Kalfje* series two years earlier.

1904

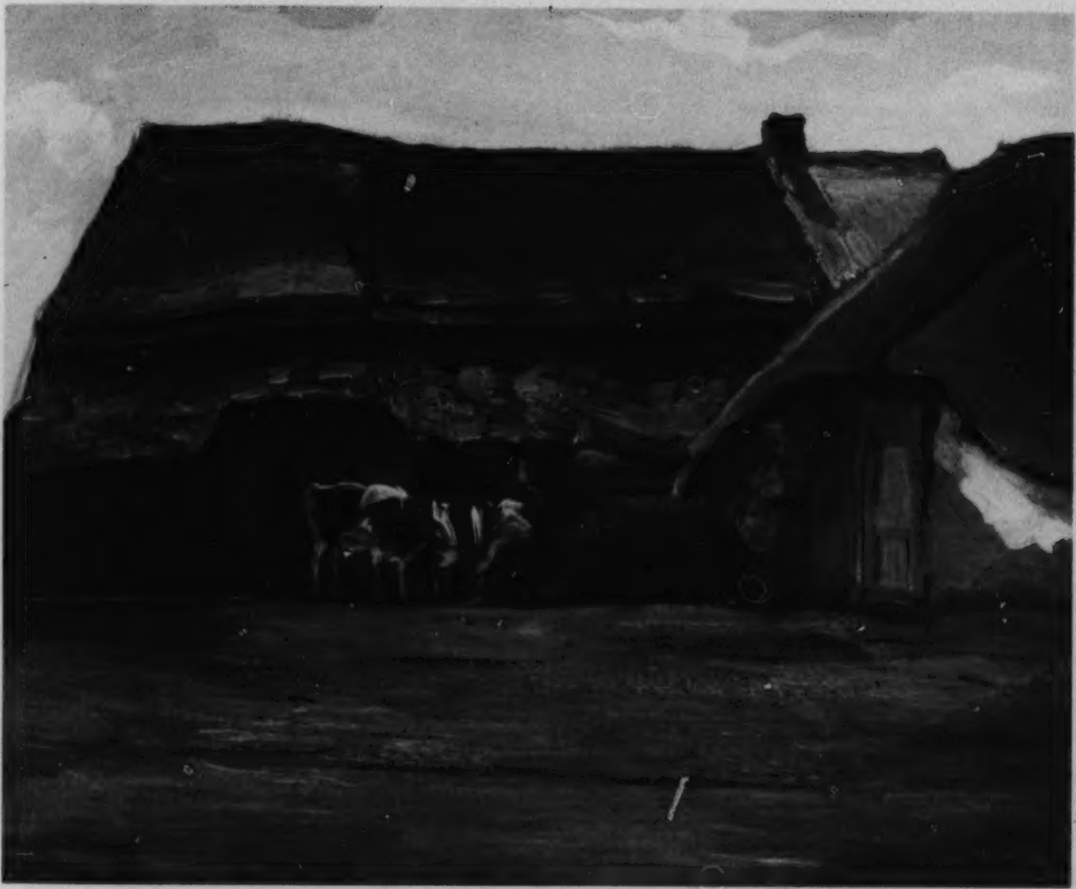
Oil on canvas (remounted on cardboard)

12-7/16 x 16-3/8 in., 31.5 x 41.5 cm.

Signed lower left: P. MONDRIAAN

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 47

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to the
Gemeentemuseum, The Hague



25 Brabant Farmyard

This painting seems to represent a farm in Brabant, since the *langgeveltyp* of farm building with barn doors on the lateral side, if not found exclusively in Brabant, is typical of that area. A date of 1904 is therefore virtually certain. Like several other known renderings of Brabant farm buildings (e.g. GM: 26 and S: ill. p. 55, c.c. 94), our example shows a truncated view in which the subject is treated at close range with a resulting magnification of scale. In this case Mondrian has further organized his composition by treating one façade frontally. Extended brush strokes in the flat foreground areas emphasize the horizontal composition. Apart from traces of Impressionist brush-work in the lower section of the roof and in the cows — the treatment of which closely relates to the various other studies of cows from the same period (see no. 24) — the generally even-flowing quality of brush-work used here is quite consistent with that in most of the water colours from the same Brabant period (e.g. nos. 26 and 27). Moreover, like them, this work suggests the late afternoon bucolic stillness which will become a cardinal aspect of the *Evening Landscape* period of *circa* 1905-08.

26 Windmill

1904

Water colour on paper

30-5/8 x 21-7/8 in., 77.7 x 55.5 cm.

Signed lower right:
Piet Mondriaan

Provenance: from the artist to
Tak collection; to Gallery "Monet";
to present owner September 1961

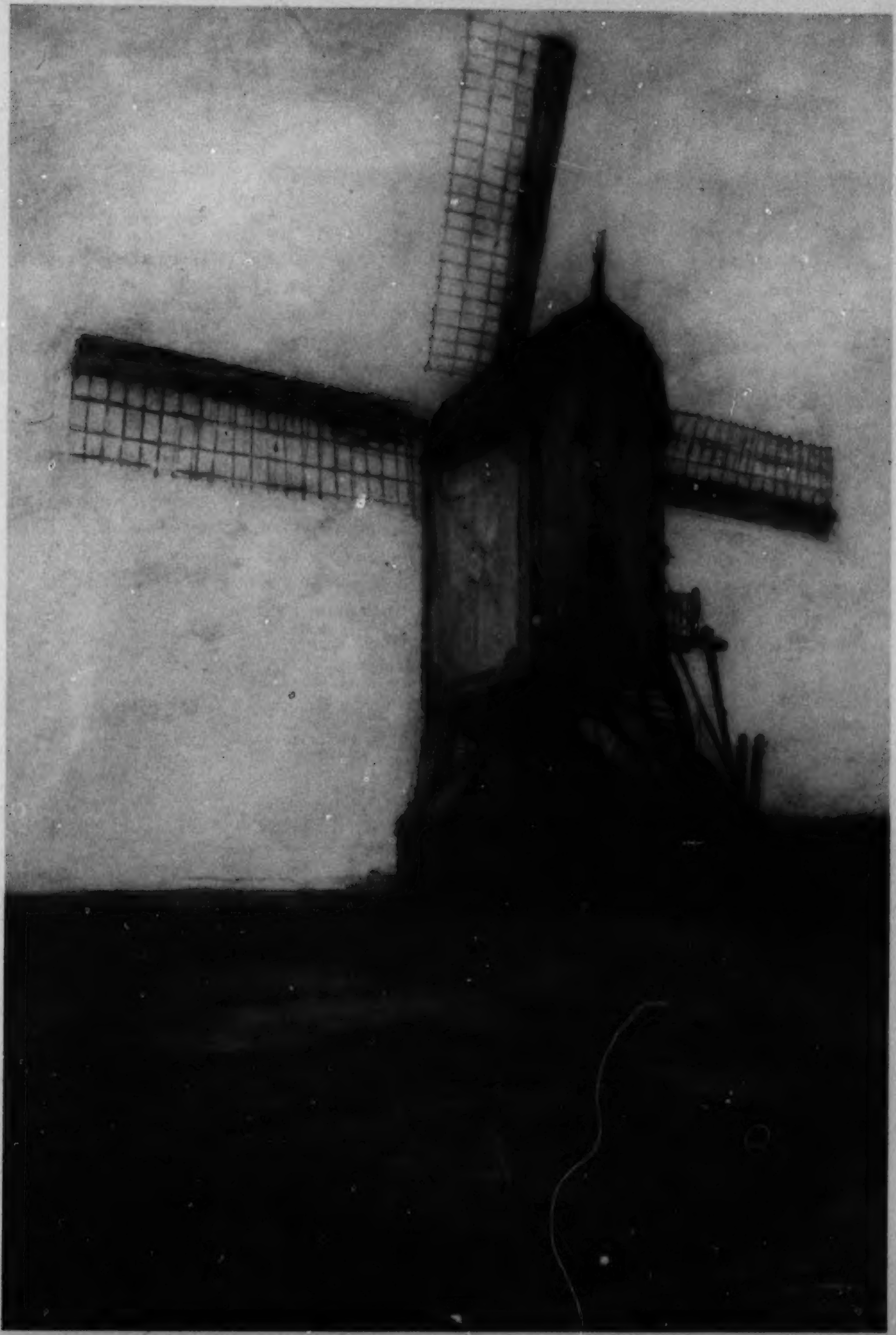
Exhibitions: Amsterdam 1904, *Arti*(?)
Part 2, no. 72

Sidney Janis Gallery

The windmill is the *standard* type commonly found in Brabant and especially in the area near Uden and Nistlerode where Mondrian lived and worked in 1904. Its eight-pointed star decoration is a local feature found on the windmills of Nistlerode and Wanroye, while its octagonal base is like that of the windmill at Uden.

The windmill motif conforms to nineteenth-century Dutch Romantic and Realist usage as well as to seventeenth-century Dutch practice, since it combines topographical reference with a Romantic love of showing the windmill in isolation like a sentinel within a vast spatial ambient. The windmill may also symbolize the local life, since it was the place where the village grain was processed, functioning literally as a source of daily bread for the local population. Like the village church, it was a dominating architectural feature of the local setting.

This water colour exhibits the same fluid and even brush strokes of *Brabant Farmyard* (no. 25). Its monumental structure and emphasis on tonal qualities of light at dusk seem to anticipate many examples of the period of the *Evening Landscapes*. An oil version from the same collection (New York 1962, no. 3) treats what is apparently the same mill from a side or profile view.



27 Interior: Kitchen

Mr van den Briel recalls that this water colour depicts one room of the farm house at Nistlerode represented from the outside in two versions (see Terpstra ill. no. 55 and S: ill. p. 55, c.c. 94). The water colour *Interior: Bedroom* (Terpstra ill. no. 53) shows an adjacent room of the house in which its owner, a certain Janneske, is seated. Both *Interior: Kitchen* and *Interior: Bedroom* were apparently exhibited as "water colour sketches" at the spring *St. Lucas* exhibition of 1907, although done three years earlier. The *Kitchen* specifically represents a typical Brabant fireplace and hearth area, which explains the occurrence of the title *De Herd* (Brabant dialect for "hearth") for a painting at the spring *St. Lucas* exhibition of 1904. Mr van den Briel recalls that this now lost painting represented the hearth in the farm of a second farmer named Janneske, but from the Brabant town of Dinther rather than Nistlerode, and that Mondrian was attracted by the forms and colours of these architectural structures, a fact indicating that his artistic orientation was still basically Impressionist and not involved with the psychological overtones of Brabant folk life which so motivated the work of Vincent van Gogh.

1904

Water colour on paper

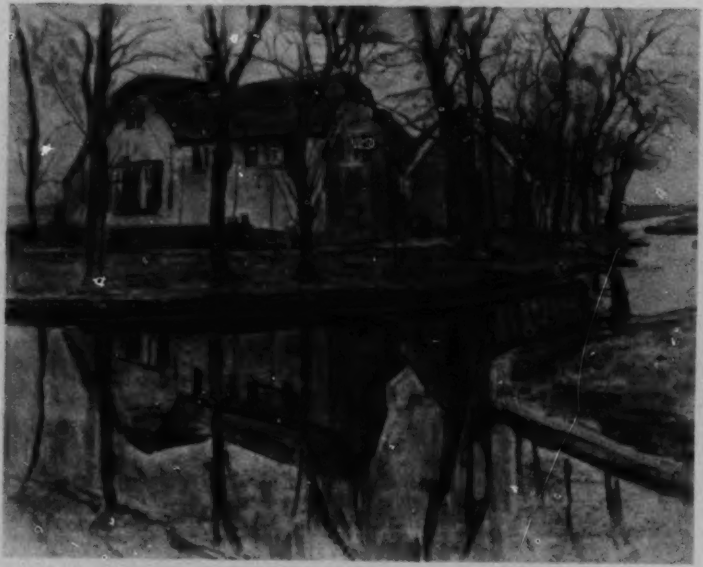
20-1/8 x 25-5/8 in., 51 x 65 cm

Signed lower right:
Piet Mondriaan.

Provenance: acquired shortly after completion from the artist by A. P. van den Briel; to Tj. Greidanus before 1930

Exhibitions: Amsterdam 1907, *St. Lucas* no. 212

Mrs Tj. Greidanus



28 Farm at Duivendrecht

This is one of many charcoal drawings which seem to have served as final preparatory designs for relatively large oil paintings (see New York 1964, Frumkin). It conforms so closely in composition to the version dated 1905 in the Bak collection in The Hague (S: c.c. 116) that a functional relationship between the two works can be assumed.

The existence of several small notebook sketches (private collection, Paris) representing various details of the composition suggests that they, as much as this larger charcoal drawing, represent Mondrian's *plein-air* recording of the subject. This deduction also helps us understand that the structural emphasis given to the composition by the mirror reflection of the farm house in the water was not accidental, but a product of Mondrian's design preferences. The striking manner in which the wedge of land in the lower right of the composition may be read two-dimensionally and also as a receding ground plane is reminiscent of a similar device already noted in *Landscape with Stream* (no. 8). Nonetheless, the structural aspect of this work can be exaggerated, and its most direct appeal is through the sensitive rendering of late afternoon light and atmosphere which makes it and the Bak oil version archetypal examples of the *Evening Landscape* period.

1905

Charcoal and estompe on bluish-grey paper (now faded)

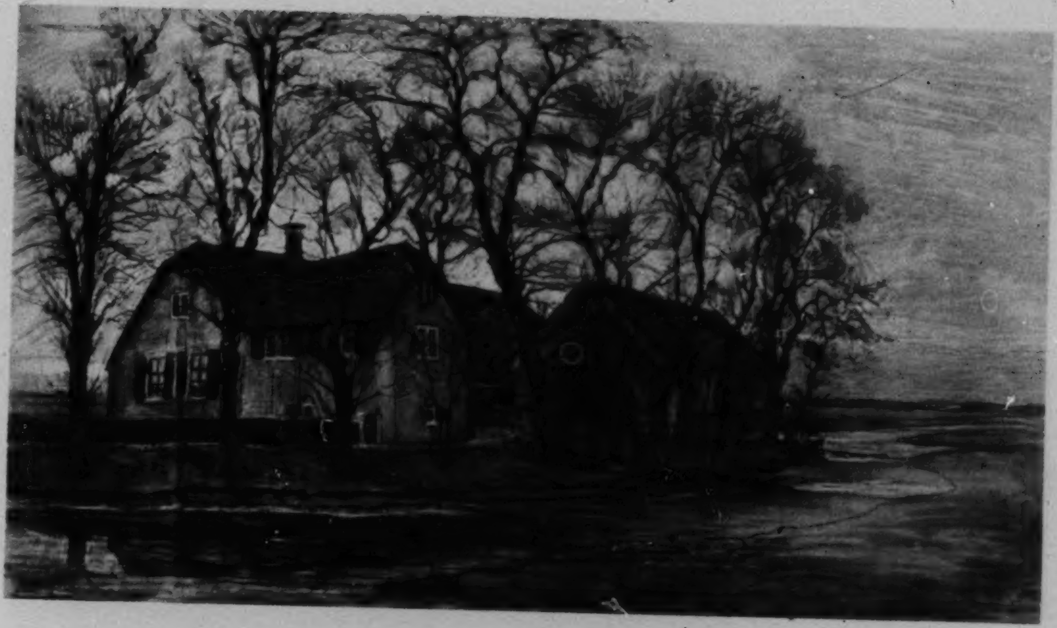
18-1/4 x 23-5/8 in., 46.3 x 60 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: acquired early in the century from the artist by Dr J. S. F. Esser; to Allan Frumkin Gallery 1960; to The Art Gallery of Toronto 1962

Exhibitions: New York 1964, Frumkin no. 8

The Art Gallery of Toronto



29 Farm at Duivendrecht

1906-07

Charcoal, crayon and gouache
on joined paper

16-15/16 x 29-15/16 in., 43 x 76 cm.

Signed lower left: Piet Mondriaan.

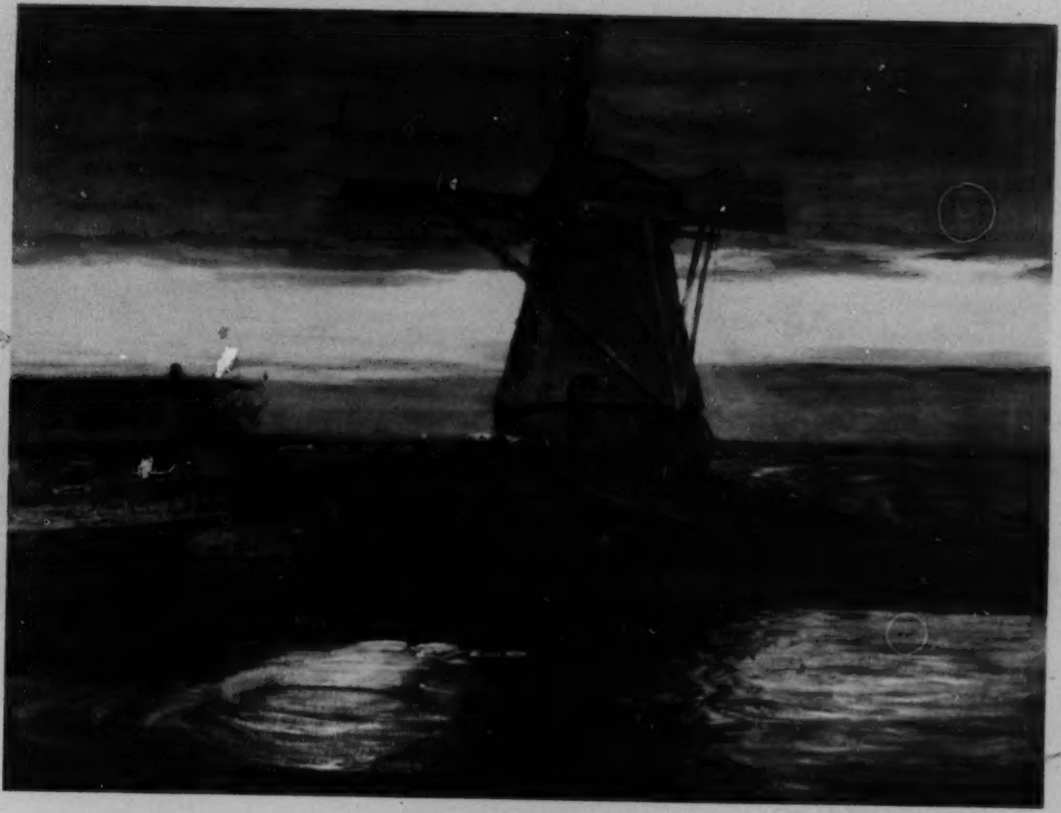
Provenance:
acquired by the present owners from
the S. B. Slijper collection, 1939

Mr and Mrs A. W. Rabbie-Vuyk

This drawing of the Duivendrecht Farm, although showing a detailed naturalism in comparison with several apparently later versions, exhibits an elongated horizontal composition typical of many works from the period of the *Evening Landscapes*. The use of parallel horizontal lines for the sky and ground areas strongly relates to a companion drawing (GM: 102, there dated 1909-10; whereas this writer would suggest the period *circa* 1906-07 for both that work and the version in the present exhibition).

30 Windmill

The date of this work can be deduced from its close stylistic similarity to the 1905 Bak *Farm at Duivendrecht* (S: c.c. 116), and also from a photograph (S: p. 29) in which a second version, probably the oil sketch now at the National Museum in Athens, is shown in Mondrian's *atelier* at Rembrandtplein 10 where he lived during most of 1905 and the first half of 1906. A third version (fig. 7), less sketchy than that in Athens, but not so detailed as the one exhibited here, includes a hayrick seen behind the small house at the left of the composition. The evening mood and horizontal band of luminous sky in *Windmill* are characteristic of the *Evening Landscape* period.



1905-06

Oil on canvas

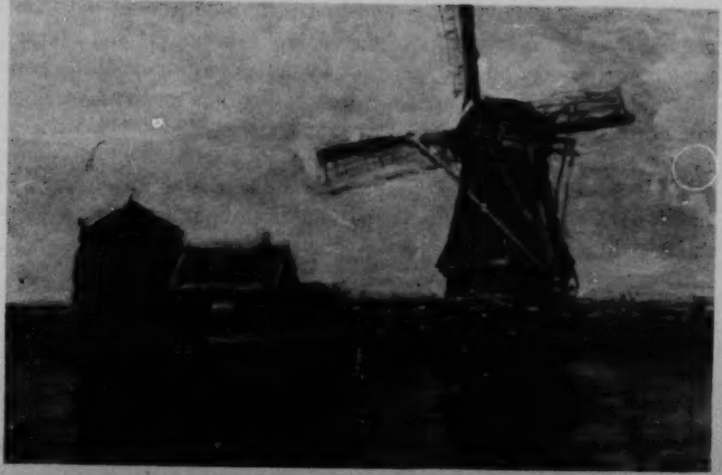
25-1/4 x 31-1/8 in., 64 x 79 cm.

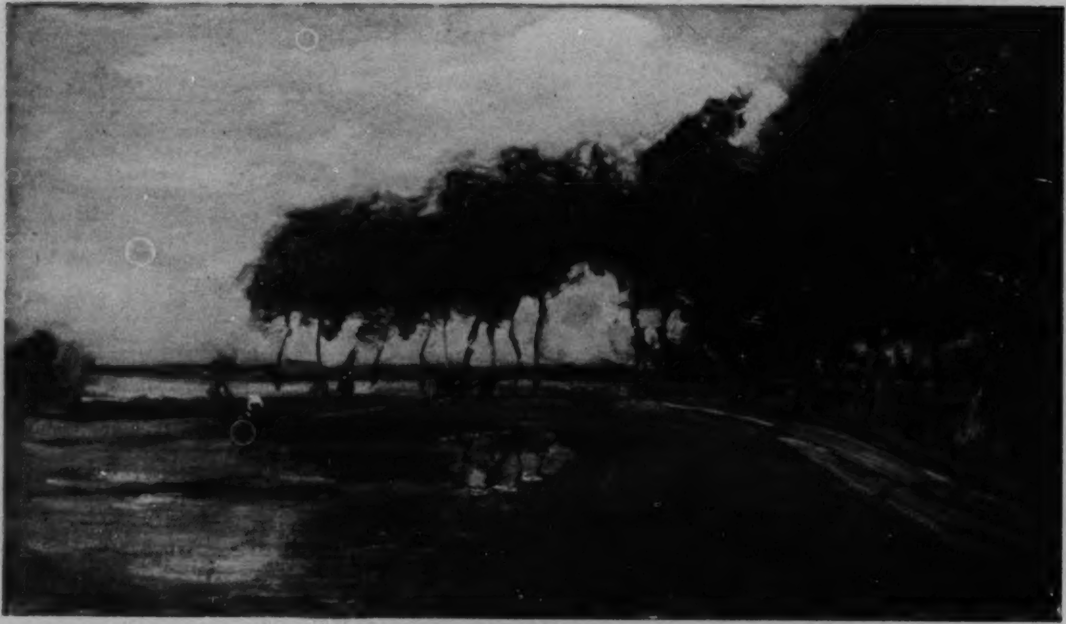
Signed lower right:
Piet Mondriaan

Provenance: J. van Heyninge, art dealer, Rotterdam; to J. van Andel, The Hague, 1944; to his daughter, the present owner, 1960

Mr and Mrs William R. L. Mead

figure 7





31 Trees along the Gein

The light brush technique and Barbizon picturesqueness of this painting develop from Mondrian's general style in the first years of the century (e.g. nos. 21 and 22) and show that The Hague School subject matter continues in much of Mondrian's late naturalistic period. A compositionally related charcoal drawing (fig. 8) indicates that both works involved an almost inevitable experiment with compositional design, which was a cardinal aspect of Mondrian's post-Brabant work (compare nos. 32 to 34). This work is the point of departure for a series in which Mondrian increasingly truncates the scene, showing progressively fewer trees. He diminishes the emphasis on receding perspective, which in this work defines an actual bend in the river, until the trees are no more than silhouettes against a flat backdrop of landscape and sky.

1905-06

Oil on canvas

10-5/8 x 18-15/16 in., 27 x 48 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN.

Provenance:
acquired by Mr H. in 1906 from the artist; to present owner 1962

Mr J. P. Smid

←

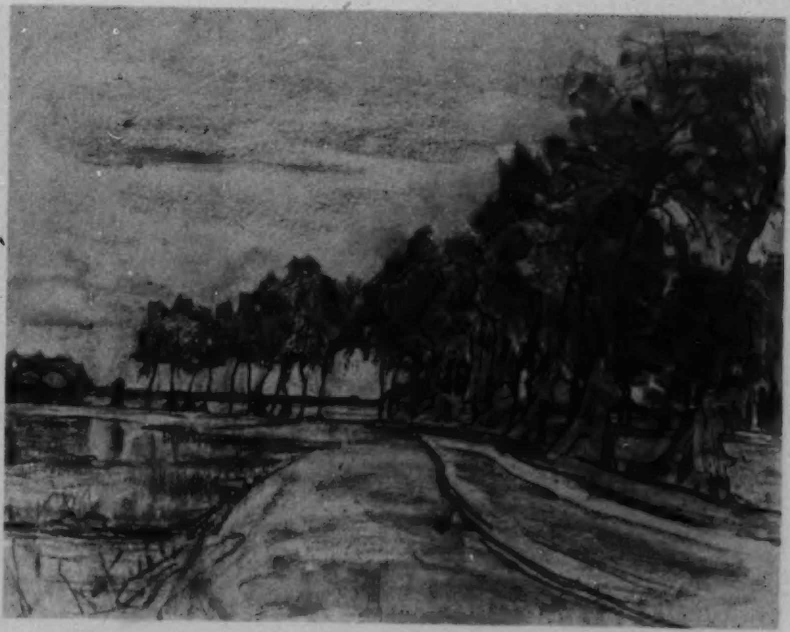
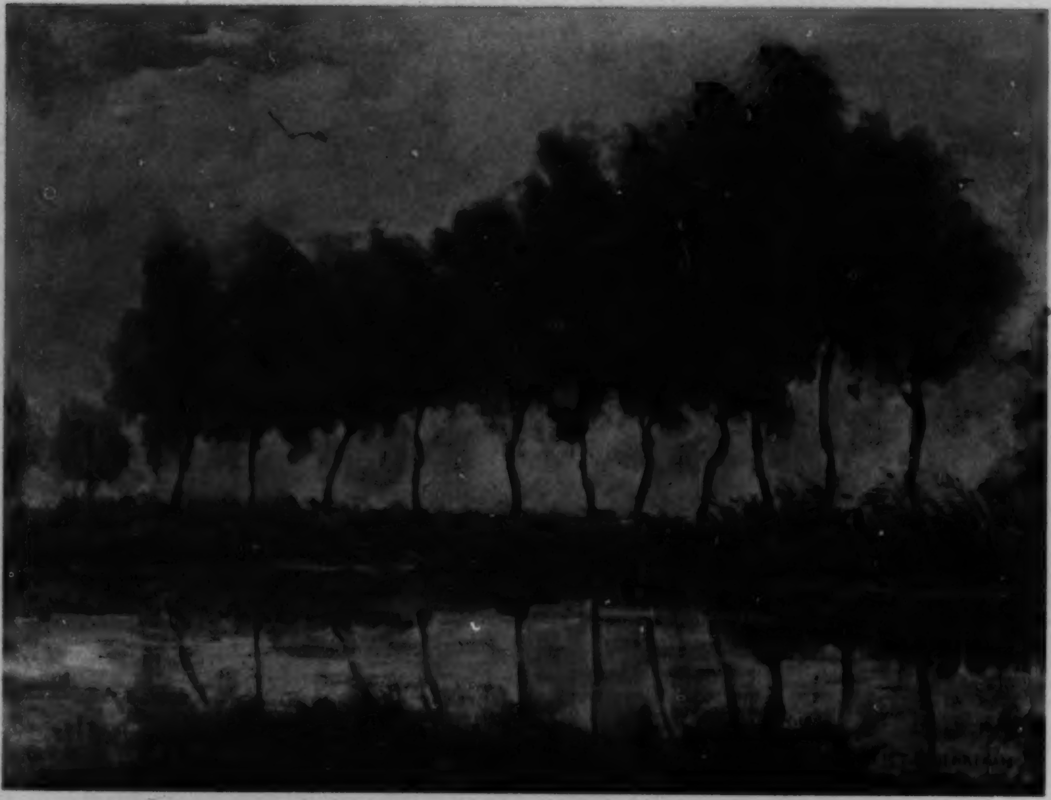


figure 8



32 Trees along the Gein

This work is one of five known paintings in which a central compositional motif of eleven trees is seen as a continuous flat surface stretching across the whole picture format (no. 33; GM: 37; New York 1963, no. 6; M. L. de Boer Gallery, Amsterdam). The subtle tones of brown, green and grey and the flat, soft brush-work compare with similar elements in the other versions. However, each painting can be considered an independent experiment to achieve specific effects of light, atmosphere and composition, rather than a study for another version. In his series of single landscape motifs, Mondrian's debt, if any, to the French Impressionist, Claude Monet, must have been of a generic nature only. Mondrian's use of a series involves variations of composition and climatic conditions quite different from the changing effects of sunlight and weather that Monet studied at regular intervals in his haystacks and cathedral façades.

1907

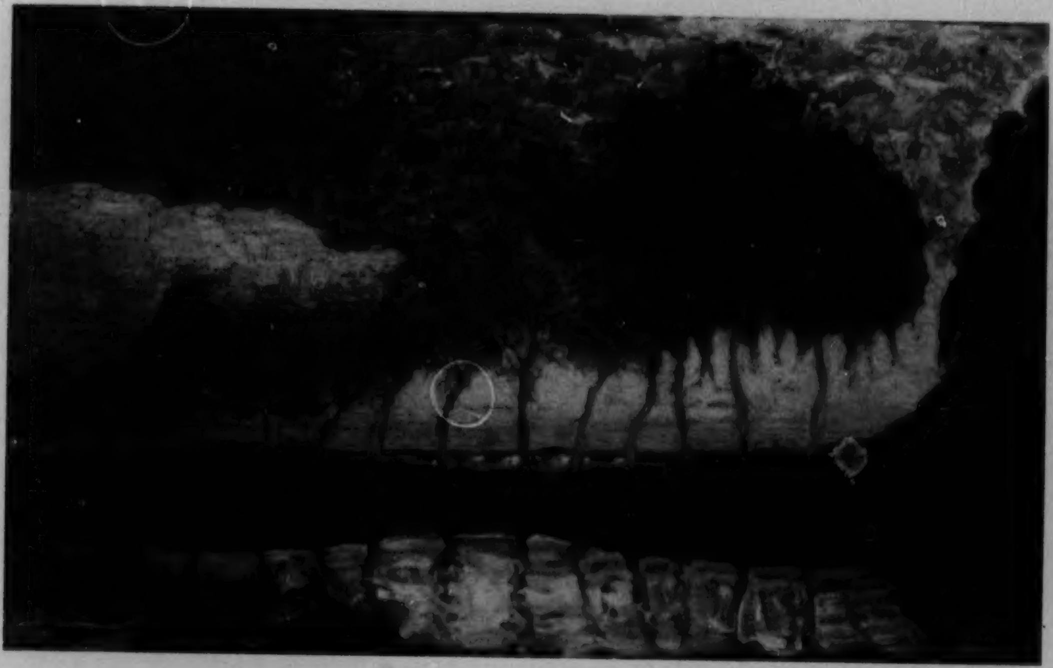
Oil on cardboard

21-1/2 x 29 in., 54.5 x 73.6 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN.

Provenance: acquired by present
owners at Parke-Bernet,
15 May 1963 (cat. 2199, no. 60)

Mr and Mrs Louis A. Green



33 Trees along the Gein

1908

Oil on canvas

27-3/16 x 44-1/8 in., 69 x 112 cm.

Signed lower right: Piet Mondriaan

Provenance: given by the artist as
payment to a cigar dealer;
to Pieter de Dood, restorer, Amsterdam;
to present owners *circa* 1952

Hannema-de Stuers Foundation

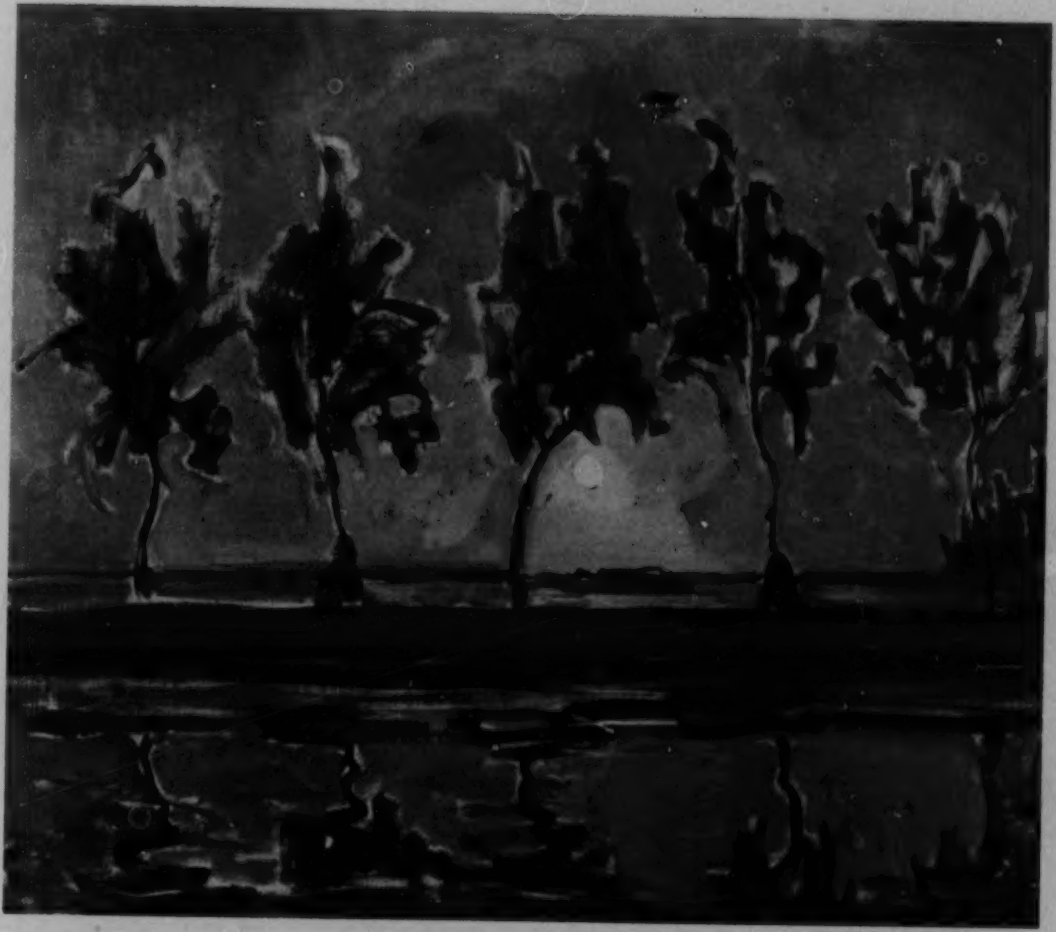
The most immediately striking aspect of this work is the dramatic use of intense red and blue for the trees and sky areas juxtaposed with naturalistic browns and greens in the foreground. This intrusion of contemporary French colour usage adumbrates the more consistent colour scheme of *Red Tree* (no. 54) and indicates the tentativeness with which Mondrian adopted such influences. Furthermore, despite a partial use of Pointillist technique, his brush-work reflects past habits, since it is comparable to that in the other more naturalistic versions of the same subject (e.g. no. 32).

34 Trees on the Gein: Moonrise

Blok has identified this subject as representing the five terminal members of the row of trees in nos. 31 and 32. Thus, the process which began with the truncation of the view of the river bend into a canonic row of eleven trees seen at an oblique angle here results in an even more formally balanced composition. Each tree and its reflection are shown in roughly equal size and viewed from directly across the river. Such truncation and formalization is paralleled in other treatments of similar subjects by Mondrian (e.g. GM: 4 and 31; see nos. 35 and 36 for the complete composition from which GM: 4 was derived). While this habit might be indebted to the *Art Nouveau* stylizations of Munch, Monet's related approach in a series of tree representations seems more relevant. It is still a moot point to what degree Mondrian would have seen original works from any of these sources by 1907. One can observe from a recent photograph taken along the Gein (fig. 9) that Mondrian's stylization of natural appearance is not as radical as might be supposed (compare especially the charcoal version of this subject, GM: 60).

Mondrian himself provides another explanation for having evolved this hieratic image out of a decidedly picturesque setting. In "Natural Reality and Abstract Reality: An Essay in Dialogue Form" of 1919-20 (S: pp. 301-352), he devotes Scene II to an interpretation of a setting similar to ours: "Capricious forms; on the clear sky with moon, the trees stand out in black relief". The discussion which takes place among the naturalist painter, art-lover and abstract-realist painter centres on the observation that at night, the rounded volume of natural form tends to be seen as a flat surface with broader and more majestic contours which intensify the inward experience of the beholder in a manner related to the effect of Byzantine or "old Chinese painting". Despite their power to intensify the beholder's experience of the beautiful, these "capricious forms" retain an element of the "tragic", which in 1919 Mondrian felt his abstract, Neo-Plastic style had largely overcome. This work comprises an intermediate stage between the particular beauty of natural objects and the universal beauty of Neo-Plastic abstraction.

The use of a monochromatic dull brick-red colour scheme for this unique work may also be related to the same essay. In Scene I the relative height of the moon from the horizon is said to determine its colour and resulting expressive value. Thus a silver-yellow moon high in the sky is less expressive than the moon closer to and therefore dominated by the horizon line. The resulting "lunar red" is more tragic because of its inability to sustain a relative proportion between the horizontal and vertical elements — the latter being felt as an imaginary line between the moon and the horizon. If we are correct in relating this particular canvas to a theory published only ten years later, its remarkable colour tonality may be interpreted as involving the same search for symbolic meaning through a concerted study of the behaviour of nature which characterized Mondrian's observation of the flattening effect of night lighting on volumetric form.



1907-08

Oil on canvas

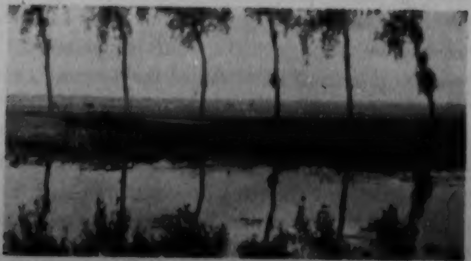
31-1/8 x 36-7/16 in., 79 x 92.5 cm.

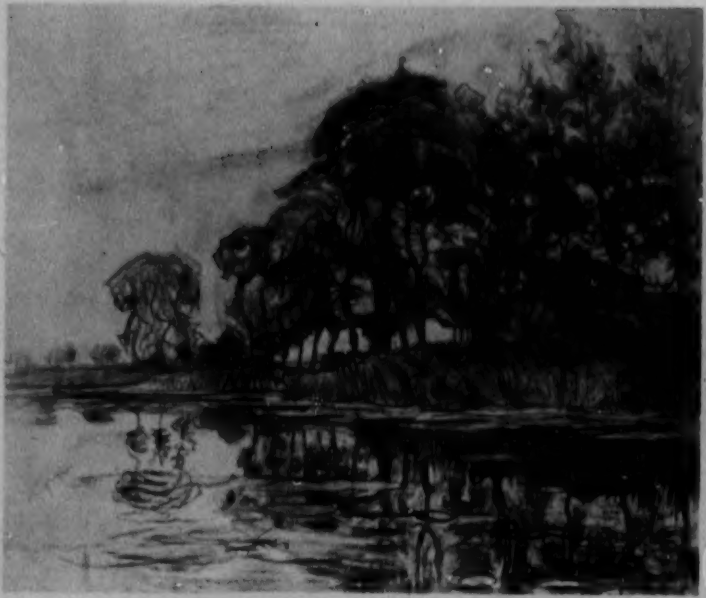
Not signed or dated

Provenance and exhibitions: see GM: 61

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

figure 9





1907

Charcoal and estompe on
joined light tan paper

28 x 33-1/4 in., 71 x 84.4 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance:
ex collection Dr J. S. F. Esser;
to Allan Frumkin Gallery 1963;
to present owner 1964

Exhibitions:
New York 1964, Frumkin no. 5

The Baltimore Museum of Art
Nelson and Juanita Greif
Gutman Collection

35 Trees bordering a River

This drawing is closely related in composition to the oil painting no. 36. In style it is similar to that illustrated in fig. 8, as well as to many other landscapes from the period 1905-08 (New York 1964, Frumkin). At first glance it may appear to be quickly sketched, but from a proper distance the balance between the foreground descriptive detail on the right and the spatial void implied by the less detailed areas at the left gives it a compositional coherence comparable to that in the oil version. A minor detail of some interest is the small circle, clearly the moon, which appears just above the trees at the right. This was so prevalent in works of the *Evening Landscape* period that it may have been included as much for its iconographic significance (see no. 34) as for the accurate rendering of the natural setting. The convincing sense of naturalistic detail in this drawing does not take away from its expressive power or hinder the freedom of the execution, which despite the linear qualities of much of the draughtsmanship remains both painterly and Impressionist.

1907

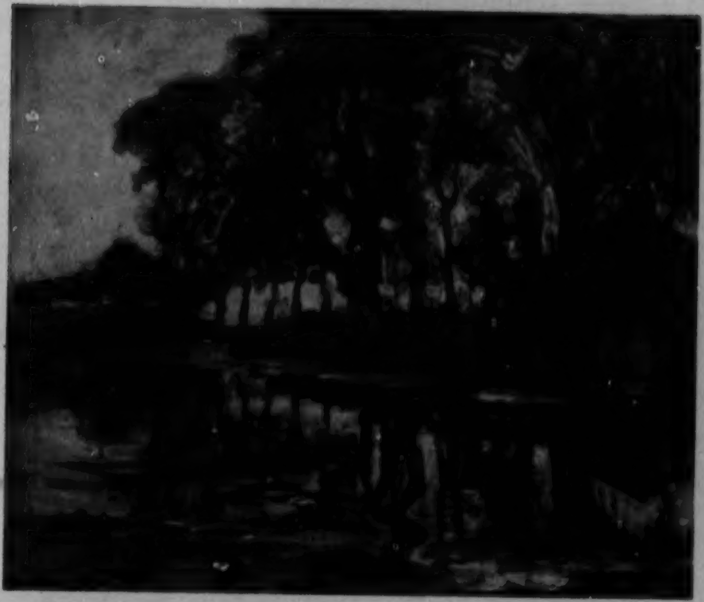
Oil on cardboard

26 x 31 in., 66 x 78.7 cm.

Signed lower left:
PIET MONDRIAAN. '07

Provenance: acquired early in the century from the artist by his friend H. J. M. Walenkamp, architect, Amsterdam/Zandvaart; to present owner, niece of Mr Walenkamp, 1917-18

Mr and Mrs P. J. Hart Nibbrig



36 Trees bordering a River

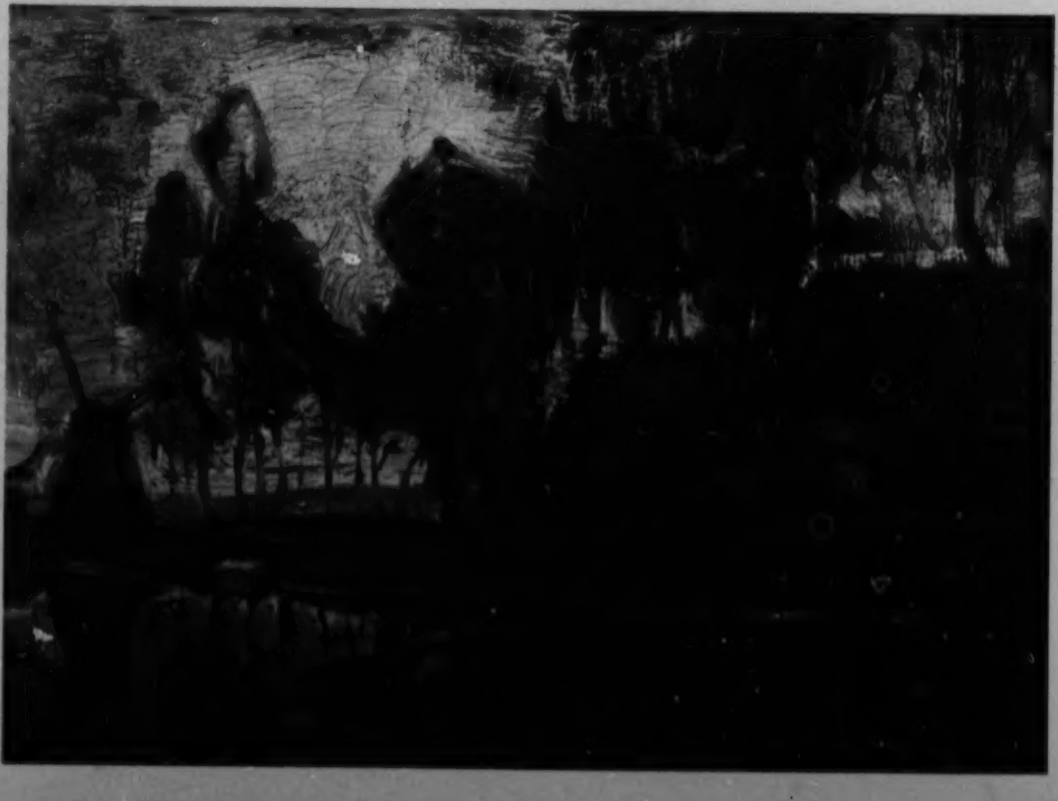
Although this work has been known for years as *"Amstel"* by the family that owns it, its topographical features suggest much more strongly the bucolic quality of the Gein River; so the neutral title, *Trees bordering a River*, seems advisable until further documentation settles the question. The subject is known in eight versions, but this is the only one actually dated and is therefore very significant in locating chronologically a major aspect of Mondrian's style in 1907. Despite the extreme fluidity or painterly quality of the late Impressionist brush-work and the tonal and atmospheric interest in late afternoon lighting, it would be a mistake to describe this work as Expressionist in intention, since the predominant mood is one of peace rather than of psychological tensions and personal anxiety. The design emphasis given to the arbour-like tree formation near the centre may be considered a naturalistic prelude to the monumental *Woods near Oele* of 1908 (no. 51).

37 Windmill and Trees

The relatively detailed execution of this painting should not obscure its close stylistic affinity to *Trees bordering a River* (no. 36), since a comparison of the foreground water shows how close in colour and brush technique the two paintings are. The marked contrast between the wavy vertical lines of the tree trunks and the horizontal emphasis of the lines describing the water illustrates a common occurrence in Mondrian's late naturalistic style.

The vertical format is not due merely to a fortuitous natural setting, as is shown by a comparison with a related work (fig. 10) of which this is clearly a detail. *Windmill and Trees* also conforms closely in format and subject to a work in the S. B. Slijper collection (S: c.c. 58), which further confirms the hypothesis that Mondrian selected his subjects as much for their compositional as for their picturesque interest.

figure 10



1907

Oil on cardboard

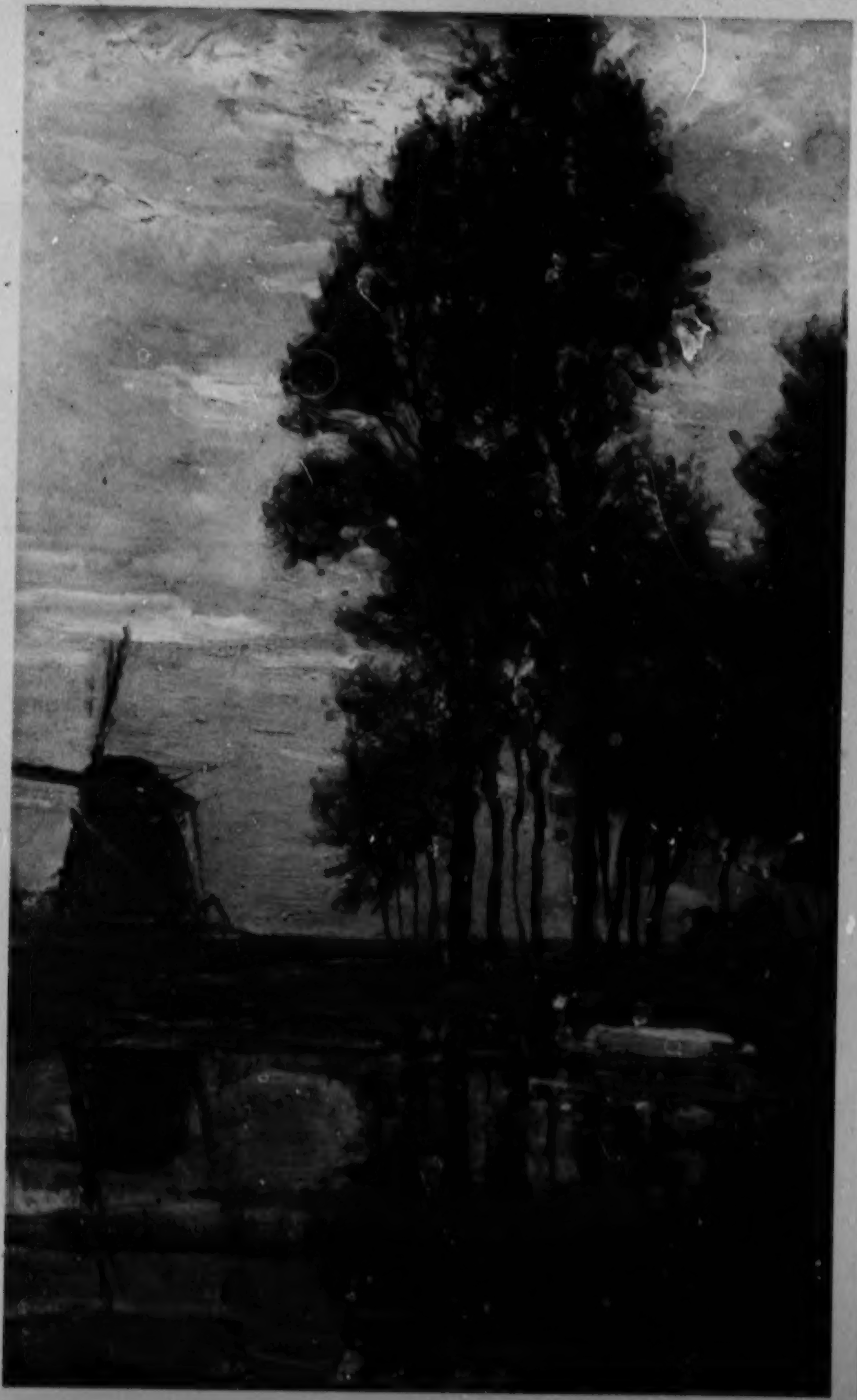
24-1/2 x 15-1/4 in.,
62.5 x 38.7 cm.

Signed lower left:
P. MONDRIAAN.

Provenance:
ex collection S. B. Slijper

Exhibitions:
Basel 1964-65, no. 10

Stephen Hahn Gallery



38 Evening Sky

This simple, luminous oil sketch, representing a stark contrast between sky and fields, is a final example of the colour scheme and mood of nos. 36 and 37, but the flat brush-work is much more loosely executed. Although essentially the same subject was often treated by Mondrian, mainly in the 1907-08 period, the actual setting for this work was very probably the farmlands near Oele in Twente where Mondrian occasionally painted at that time with his friend Albert Hulshoff-Pol. This is borne out by the fact that this painting seems to have been part of a shipment of about eleven oil sketches on cardboard of similar size sent from the Twente city of Hengelo in Overijssel to Mondrian's address at Albert Cuypstraat 272 in Amsterdam, where he lived from 28 June 1906 to 6 January 1908 (Terpstra p. 338). Moreover, it and several others among these sketches seem to show the farmlands in the eastern areas of the Netherlands rather than the flat meadow surrounding Amsterdam. In this example determining the setting is of value chiefly for purposes of dating, since Mondrian had so universalized his treatment of the subject that topographical accuracy is less important than compositional interest and expressive values of colour, light and atmosphere. The broadly spaced foreground brush strokes anticipate the more radical works of the transitional years 1908-09 (e.g. GM: 74a and 101).

1907-08

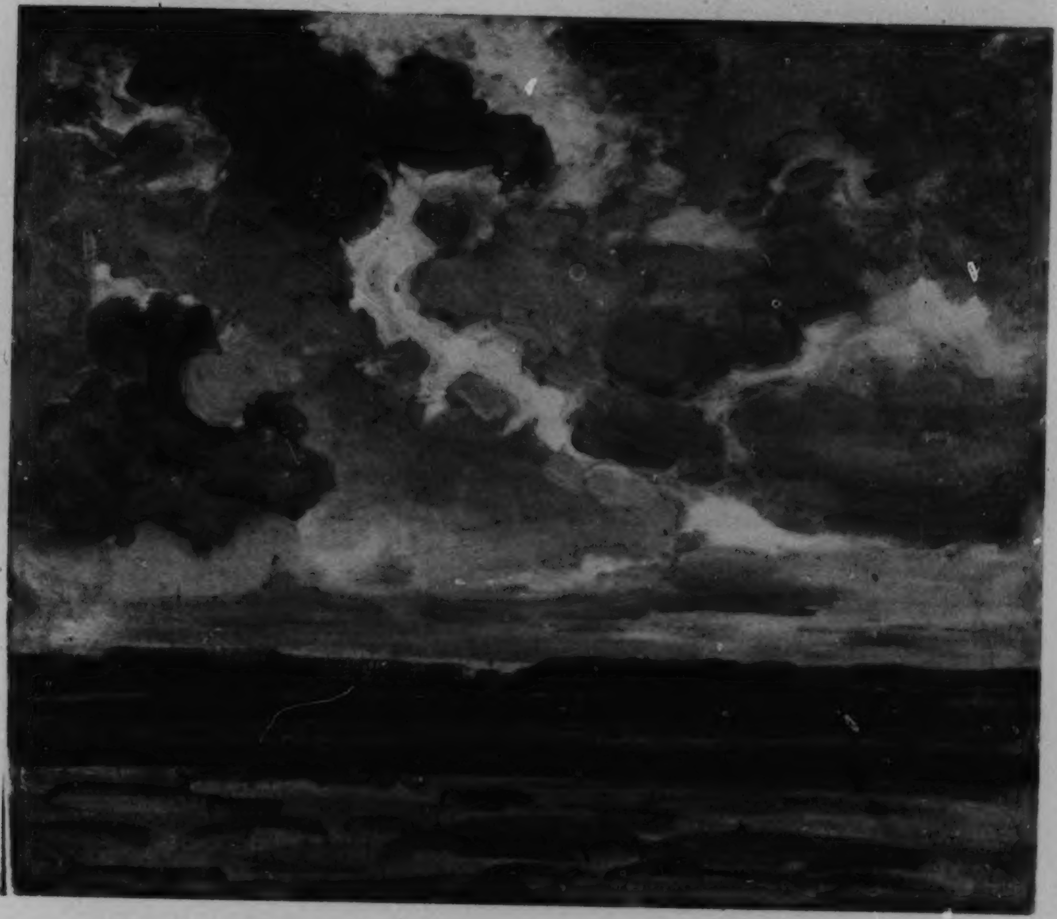
Oil on cardboard

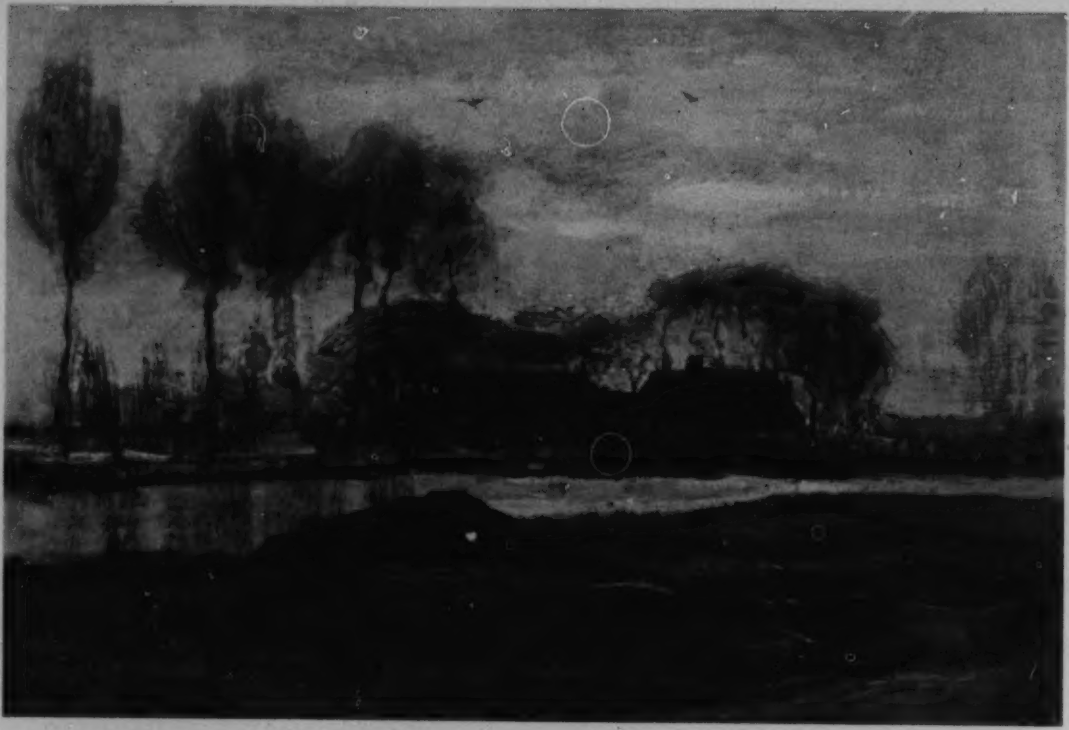
25-1/4 x 29-1/8 in., 64 x 74 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: acquired *circa* 1944
from an art dealer by the painter T. S.;
to present owner 1963

Art Gallery "Monet"





39 Summer Night: Oil Sketch

Despite the pencil inscription on the stretcher, *"Watergraafsmeer"*, the Amsterdam suburb where Mondrian lived in 1897 and 1903-04 (Terpstra p. 338), the subject of this work is more likely to be a scene along the Amstel River or even more probably the area of the Gein, because of the isolation of the farm house, the meandering river and the relative lack of raised embankments. Moreover, despite a relatively disciplined execution, the breadth of compositional format and spatial recess suggests a date closer to the larger *Summer Night* (no. 40) of *circa* 1907-08. In the later work (and a preparatory drawing, GM: 57) the painterly and nebulous atmospheric effects threaten to dematerialize the composition altogether, but related stylistic qualities are also present in the smaller version, especially in the thin flat brush strokes of several trees at the left.

1906-07

Oil on canvas

12-1/4 x 17 in., 31 x 43.1 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance:
ex collection Mrs K. Legat, The Hague;
(on loan to the Gemeentemuseum,
The Hague, April 1955 to *circa* 1963);
Jon Streep 1963;
to present owner 1965

Allan Frumkin Gallery

1907

Oil on canvas

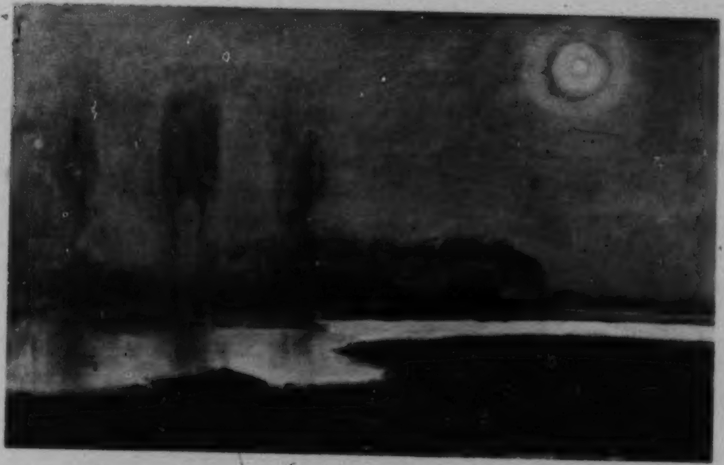
28 x 44-1/8 in., 71 x 112 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance:
ex collection van Dam, London;
Fred. Mueller, 29 October 1929,
no. 39; on loan to the Stedelijk
Museum since 6 October 1952

Exhibitions:
Amsterdam 1907, *Arti*, no. 134 (?);
Rotterdam 1915, no. 41 (?)

Private collection on loan to
the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam



40 Summer Night

The title of this painting depends upon its identification with *Zomernacht*, the only work by Mondrian in the *Arti* exhibition of April-May 1907. This identification is highly probable, because of the following review written by the talented critic and painter, and friend of Mondrian, Conrad Kikkert (*De Telegraaf*, 13 April 1907):

Piet Mondriaan (scandalously hung): a dream of a Summer Night. It is moonmist above a tall tree along the water. The tone is silvery white-purple. The dark purple halo around the golden moon is independent in tone and has no delineation, no [surrounding] space.

This description not only seems more appropriate to this particular painting than to any other, but in general characterizes an important segment of Mondrian's production during 1907 and 1908 (see nos. 34 and 44; GM: 56). The intensely felt atmospheric quality which almost dissolves the natural objects into vague, even ghostly images, suggestive of similar motifs in the work of Munch or Holder, is nevertheless related to the conception of *Trees on the Gein: Moonrise* (no. 34). Thus, the silvery tone may relate to the placing of the moon farther from the horizon than in the *Trees on the Gein: Moonrise*, causing it to have less of the latter's "tragic" red colour. As a result, the enveloping moonmist does not prevent the viewer from sensing a strong axis along the horizon line, and perceiving the contrast between it and the vertical design contained in the feather-like trees at the left and the imagined perpendicular line from the moon to the horizon at the right. Finally, the stylistic affinity between this larger version and the smaller oil sketch (no. 39) transcends the obvious differences in their finish and hour of execution. Both exhibit a compositional structure not unlike that found in such a dissimilar setting as *Pond near Saasveld* (no. 41).

41 Pond near Saasveld

1907

Oil on canvas

20-11/16 x 29 in., 52.5 x 73.5 cm.

Signed lower left: P. MONDRIAAN

Provenance:
Mr and Mrs Hulshoff Pol-ter Horst
1909; to Mr and Mrs Bodisco Massink-
Hulshoff Pol 1922;
to present owner 1948

Private collection, the Netherlands

The owners have always known this painting under the present title. The Twente origin of *Pond near Saasveld* (a hamlet close by the actual setting, a *molenven* at Denekamp) is corroborated by the discovery of a label on the reverse side, directing that the painting be sent from Hengelo, in Twente, to Mondrian in Amsterdam (see no. 38). It is difficult to identify the scene exactly, but the type of farm house and the trees and water areas *(Ven* in Dutch denotes a very shallow, marshy pond, here indicated by the reed formations in the right foreground) certainly suggest the general Twente setting. The traditional designation of the large oil version at the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague (GM: 38) as *Landscape at Oele* is justified, if the term *"Oele"* is understood as a generic one for the area of Twente rather than limited to the specific hamlet of that name.

Although *Pond near Saasveld* does not include the upright tree at the far right of *Landscape at Oele* (found also in a large charcoal drawing, New York 1964, Frumkin no. 13), there is no doubt that all three works represent the same subject. Mondrian's tentative use of an unmixed, more radiant palette in this work is comparable to the Hannema *Trees along the Gein* (no. 33), since the intense blue and yellow luminosity of the sky balances and enlivens the greenish-brown naturalistic colouring of the landscape.

42 Mill on the Gein

This majestic canvas probably shows the so-called "French Mill", one of two large seventeenth-century *kloeke* ("sturdy") windmills along the Gein. This identification was made by A. P. van den Briel, and is confirmed by the actual features of the mill as seen in fig. 11 and in another large oil version in the S. B. Slijper collection (S: ill. p. 211, c.c. 102), dated 1907, and relatively detailed in execution. In the latter, the mill is placed almost exactly in the centre of the composition, whereas this more painterly version shifts it somewhat to the right. A close comparison with another windmill oil sketch by Mondrian (S: c.c. 109) shows that again Mondrian has chosen to treat a major detail of the larger painting in isolation as a separate composition. The relationship between the body of the mill and the adjacent summer house, the contours of the foreground bridge, the foliage, and, above all, the brilliant reflection of the moonlight on the water relate the sketch in subject matter to this painting. This habit is common to Mondrian throughout his career (see no. 37). *Mill on the Gein,* because of its use of colour which includes certain prefigurations of unmixed hues, can be considered a major example of Mondrian's last experiments within an essentially naturalistic mode of representation. In October 1965 another oil sketch version showing the mill from the same angle was auctioned at Mak van Waay, Amsterdam, cat. no. 394.

1907-08

Oil on canvas

39-1/4 x 49-1/2 in., 99.6 x 125.7 cm.

Signed lower right: PIET MONDRIAAN

Provenance:
ex collection Simon Maris;
van Dam collection, London;
Fred. Mueller, 28 October 1929,
no. 41; private collection, Hengelo,
Overijssel; Jon Streep, New York,
1960; to present owner 1963

Exhibitions:
New York 1964, Frumkin no. 1

Allan Frumkin Gallery

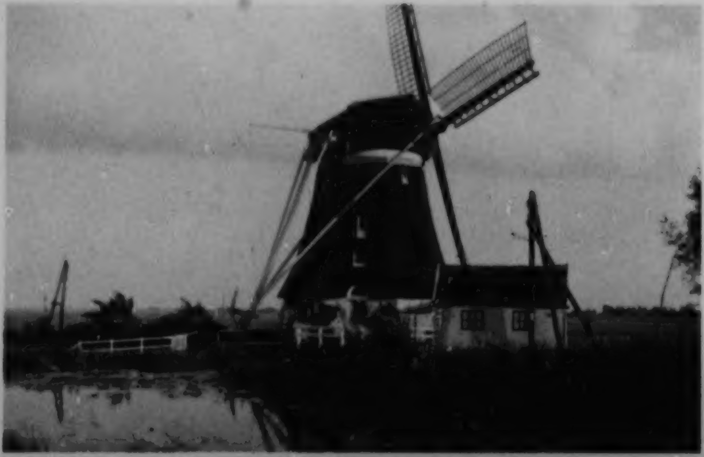
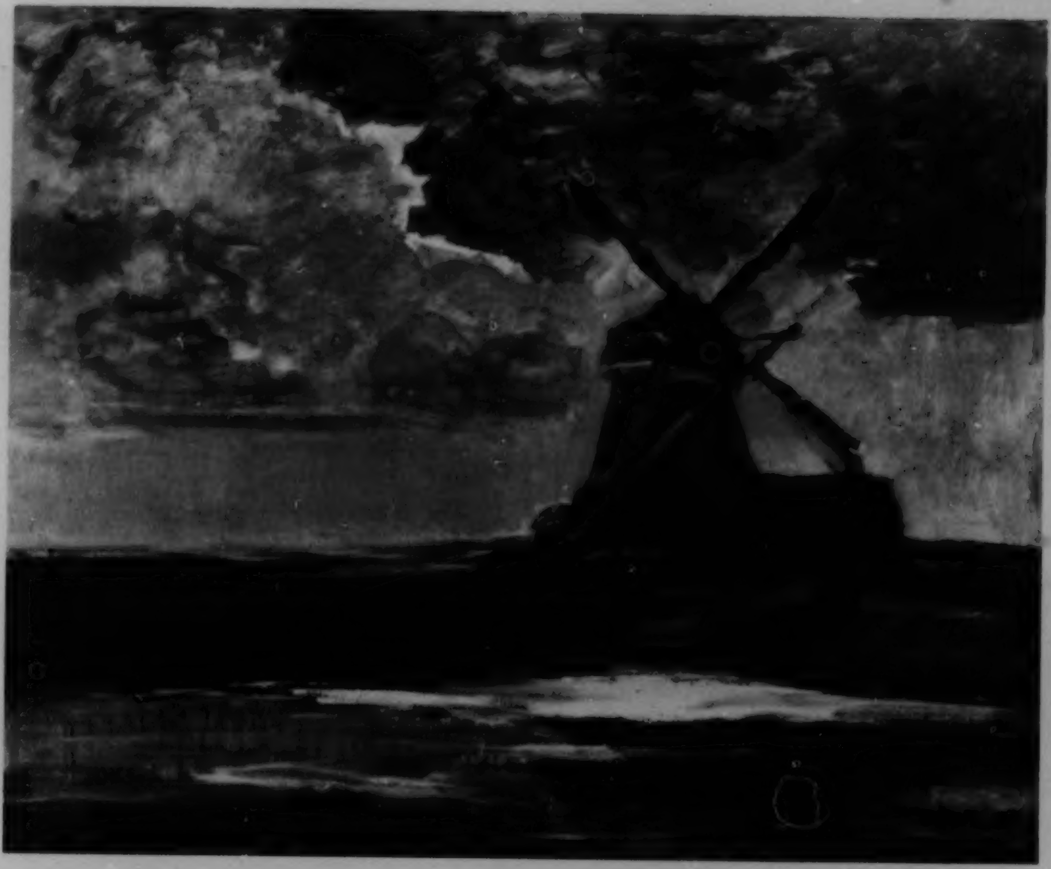


figure 11



43 Dredge

This subject is known in two other oil versions (GM: 45 and private collection, Paris) and also in a charcoal drawing (S. B. Slijper collection). The sand dredge, according to a previous owner of the painting, was one Mondrian discovered in use along the Amstel. The title *Baggermolen*, although not strictly accurate for a sand dredge, was given to the version at the Gemeentemuseum while it was in the Rotterdam *Kunstkring* exhibition of 1915 (where it was listed with the very unlikely date of 1909). In his sketch books of *circa* 1911-14, Mondrian refers to the positive effects of modern industrial society on man's happiness, and cites as an example the steam-powered *Baggermolen* supplanting traditional windmills. Thus, already in a work of 1907, using the extremely dark palette of the *Evening Landscape* period, Mondrian may have been trying to incorporate new iconographic imagery appropriate to, in his own words, "the modern world". Another striking aspect of this work is its rigid rectilinear composition in which all principal planes are set parallel to the picture plane. The brush-work is similar to that of the equally flatly conceived *Evening on the Gein* (GM: 21) and *Mist on the Amstel* (GM: 56) and, despite its monochromatic colour scheme, such later works as *Mill at Domburg* (no. 47) and *The Red Mill* (no. 59).

1907

Oil on cardboard
(remounted on presswood panel)

25 x 29-3/4 in., 63.4 x 73.5 cm.

Signed lower left:
PIET MONDRIAAN. '07

Provenance: private collection, Amsterdam; Sidney Janis Gallery; to present owner 1962

Exhibitions: New York 1962, no. 6

Mr and Mrs James H. Clark

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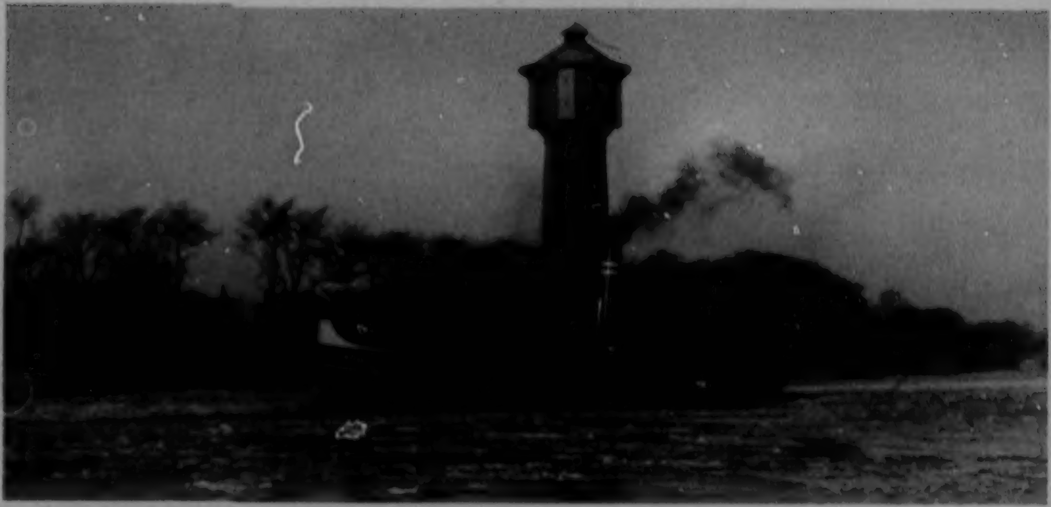
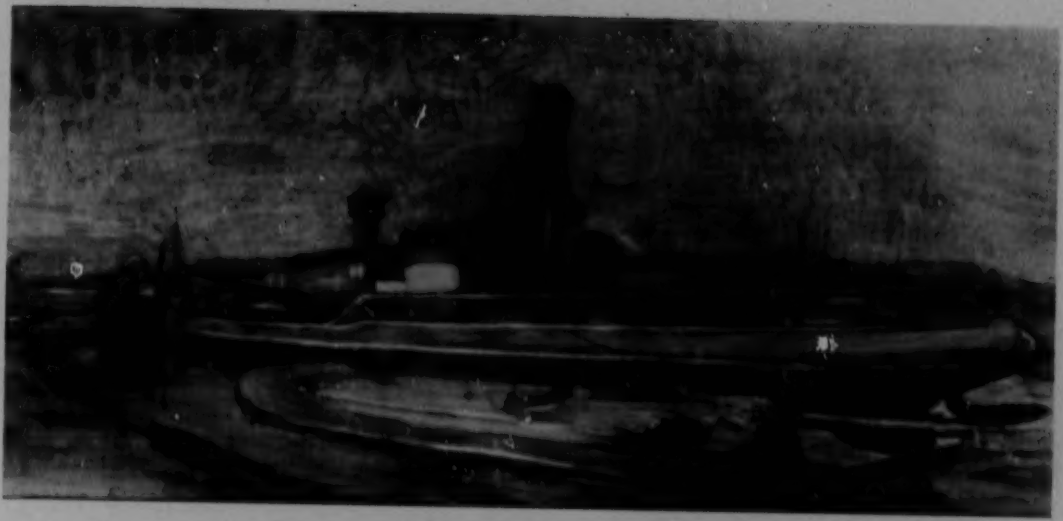


figure 12

44 Steamboat moored along the Amstel

In this work Mondrian again transforms subject motifs from earlier phases of his career (see no. 12 and S: c.c. 123). More than in any other version of a similar subject, Mondrian has given this barge massive proportions by bringing it close to the viewer and placing it in a night atmosphere, while retaining rather accurate detail. That the subject reflects an actual setting along the Amstel is shown by a photograph (fig. 12) of such a steam-powered boat, behind which can be seen a water tower, now destroyed. Both the water tower, despite its mediaevalizing architecture, and the boat may be thought of as images which to Mondrian implied the dominance of the man-made machine world of modern times over such antiquated aspects of man's environment as wind-driven sail boats. The monochromatic use of blue applied in free, even brush strokes is found in a more distilled form throughout the better known *Blue Tree* series from this period (e.g. GM: 101).



1908

Water colour on paper

30-3/4 x 67 in., 78 x 170 cm.

Signed lower left: *Piet Mondriaan*

Provenance:
ex collection Dr J. S. F. Esser

Exhibitions: Paris 1957, Cordier no. 5

Private collection, Paris

45a Chrysanthemum

The dominant blue background and freely flowing brush-work relate *Chrysanthemum* in style and date to *Steamboat moored along the Amstel* (no. 44). Apart from the difference in subject, there is a similar attempt to create a composition based on an extended axis, in this case vertical rather than horizontal. While not without precedent in Mondrian's earlier work (see no. 18), and in the period *circa* 1907-08 to which its style relates (see GM: 84 to 88, especially 88, a charcoal study for this work), it deserves special notice. Whether or not it was actually based upon the same flower, an iconographic relation to the better known *Dying Chrysanthemum* (no. 45b) is indicated by the inclusion in both of a dark wall or screen at the left of the composition. A thematic contrast between the sense of sturdiness and life in *Chrysanthemum* and the fascination with incipient decay and death implied in *Dying Chrysanthemum* seems equally inherent in two charcoal drawings relating to them (GM: 88 and fig. 13). The *Art Nouveau* and Symbolist movements (see James p. 108) have been correctly cited as providing the intellectual and artistic background for *Dying Chrysanthemum*. However, Mondrian's interest in an iconography concerned with the dualism of life and death forces (see GM: 64 and Sweeney pp. 3 and 4) probably does not reflect a literal adoption of Symbolist thinking, in which specific flowers were equated with traditional iconographic values (see no. 18). Certainly healthy chrysanthemums far outnumber the dying ones in Mondrian's total *œuvre*, and during this period sunflowers too were represented in both vital health and decay. The answer to this problem may rest in Mondrian's increasing interest in Theosophic thinking, in which polar contrasts between life and death, day and night, man and woman, and the natural and ideal levels of reality were common. *Dying Chrysanthemum* was probably the work submitted under the title *Metamorphosis* to an exhibition in Brussels in the summer of the year 1909, an indication that its death did not necessarily imply a completely negative content. In the context of Mondrian's whole career, the death of this particular flower can be interpreted as symbolic of the death of a still fundamentally naturalistic concept of art and of his reaction against the attraction of the "outward beauty" of things (see Mondrian's own later analysis quoted by A. [de Meester-] O[breen], *Elsevier's Geïllustreerd Maandschrift*, XXV: 1915, pp. 398-399, partly translated in *Sweeney* p. 4, but dated wrongly to 1916).

1908

Water colour

37 x 10-5/8 in., 94 x 27 cm.

Signed lower left: PIET MONDRIAAN

Provenance: acquired from
artist *circa* 1919

Mr S. B. Slijper

45b Dying Chrysanthemum

1908

Oil on canvas

33-5/16 x 21-5/16 in., 84.5 x 54 cm.

Signed lower left: PIET MONDRIAAN

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 64; also exhibited Amsterdam
1909, Stedelijk; Amsterdam 1909,
St. Lucas (?) no. 386; Brussels 1909,
no. 80(?); New York 1945(?)

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to the
Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

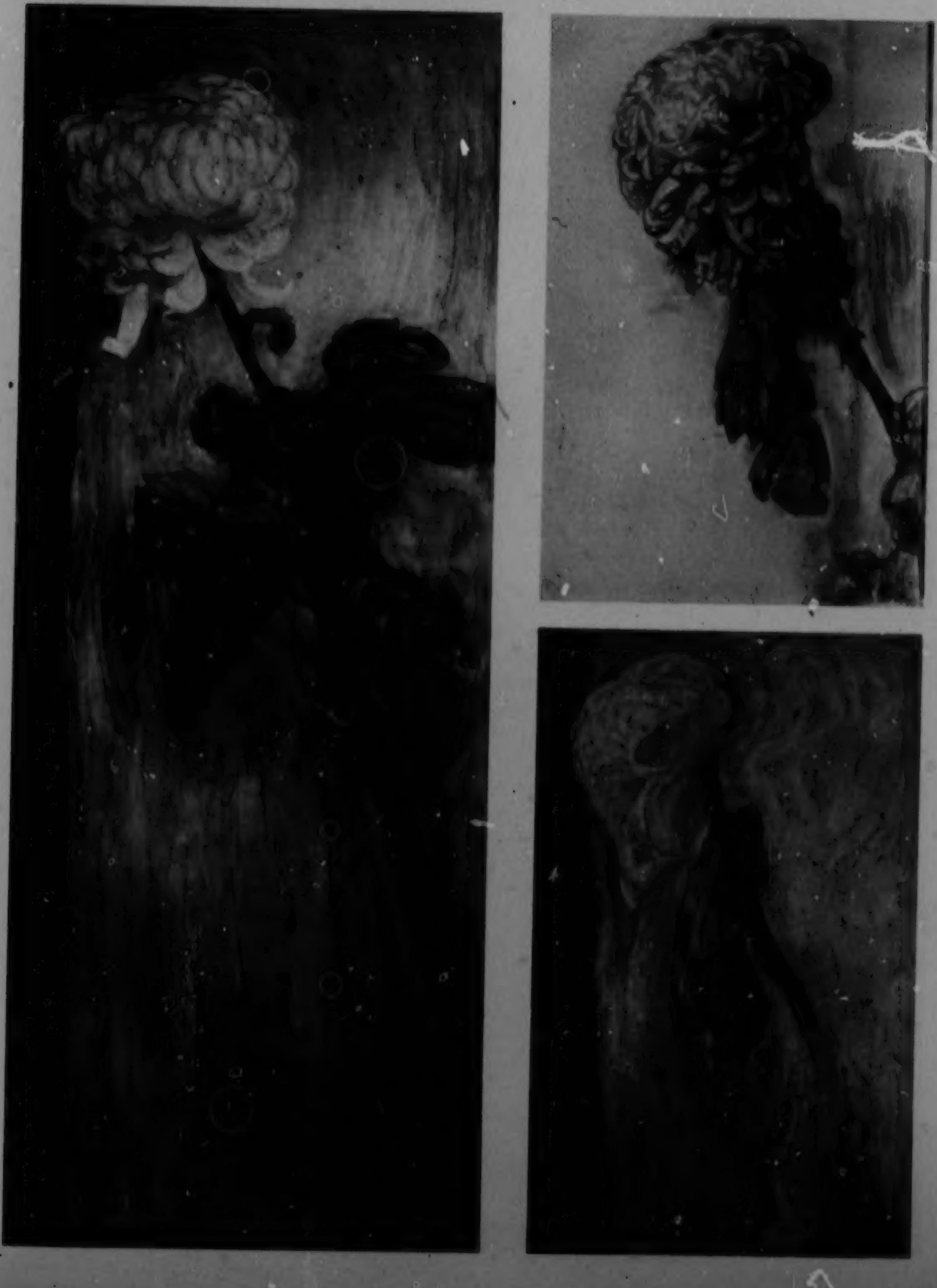


figure 13

46 Winter Landscape

At first glance this work seems simply another excellent example of Mondrian's late Impressionist landscapes in which he represents a particular effect of atmosphere or seasonal change, using his own developed version of Barbizon *plein-air* traditions. It incorporates an advanced form of the brush-work employed in a number of early studies such as *Farmyard* (no. 22) and *Study of Cows* (no. 24). A device common to Mondrian's naturalistic landscapes is his use of the apple tree at the left as a *repoussoir* object, behind which can be seen a row of trees in the distance. However, a second version of this work (fig. 14), with an even sketchier brush technique, shows in the background a farm house sheltered by trees. Because of a striking resemblance of the architectural features (e.g. the proportion of building parts and the Gothicizing Utrecht trim with which the raking cornices of the gable are decorated) to an actual farm house along the south side of the Gein (the first house reached when one walks north from the De Vink café where Mondrian often lodged), it is likely that Mondrian's selection and various treatments of this setting were undertaken after considerable forethought.

This particular work has a special importance in Mondrian's development because of the clear relation between the apple tree and the series of similar studies which he began *circa* 1908. Even if it is not the same tree, the contours have been similarly stylized and somewhat flattened in the manner of both *Red Tree* (no. 54) and *Grey Tree* (no. 66). The basic conception is similar to that in many other treatments of buildings seen through a foreground frame of arbour-like branches, such as *Castle Ruin: Brederode* (no. 49) and the much earlier versions of *Reformed Church at Winterswijk* (see no. 14). But in this case Mondrian has chosen to emphasize the horizontal axis of the composition in the horizon itself, the implied building axis, the flow of branch lines in the apple tree and especially the extended brush strokes of the water areas in the foreground.

1907-08

Oil on canvas

14 x 24-1/4 in., 35.5 x 61.5 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONRIAAN. *(sic)*

Provenance:
P. R. Nieboer van Haasen 1910;
Gallery d'Eendt, Amsterdam, 1963;
acquired June 1963 by present owner

Exhibitions:
The Hague 1955, no. 31;
Zurich 1955, no. 15;
London 1955, no. 11

Dr P. Dobbelmann

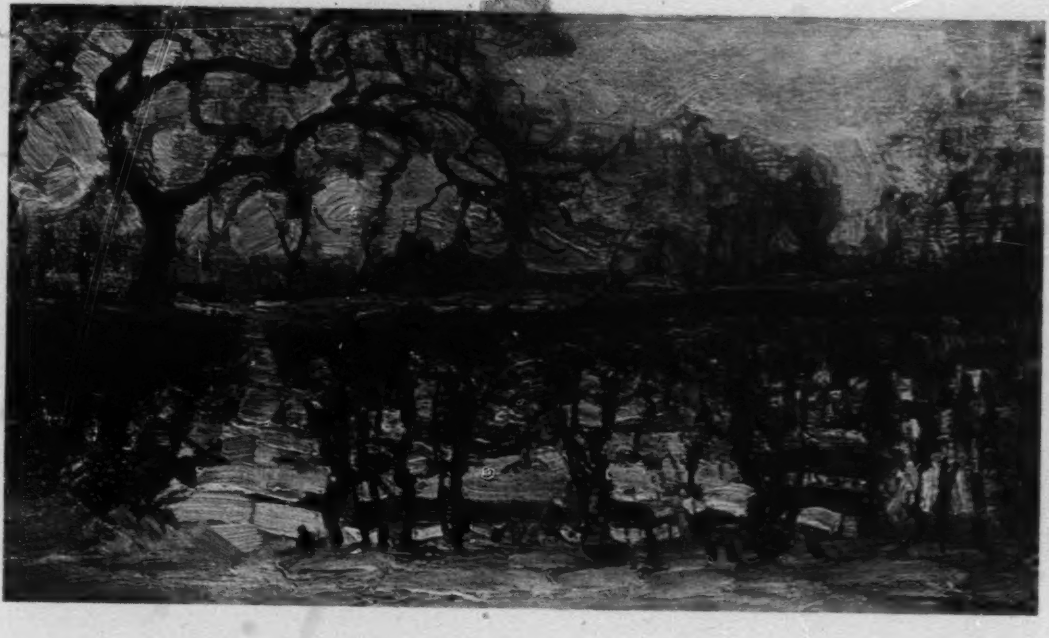
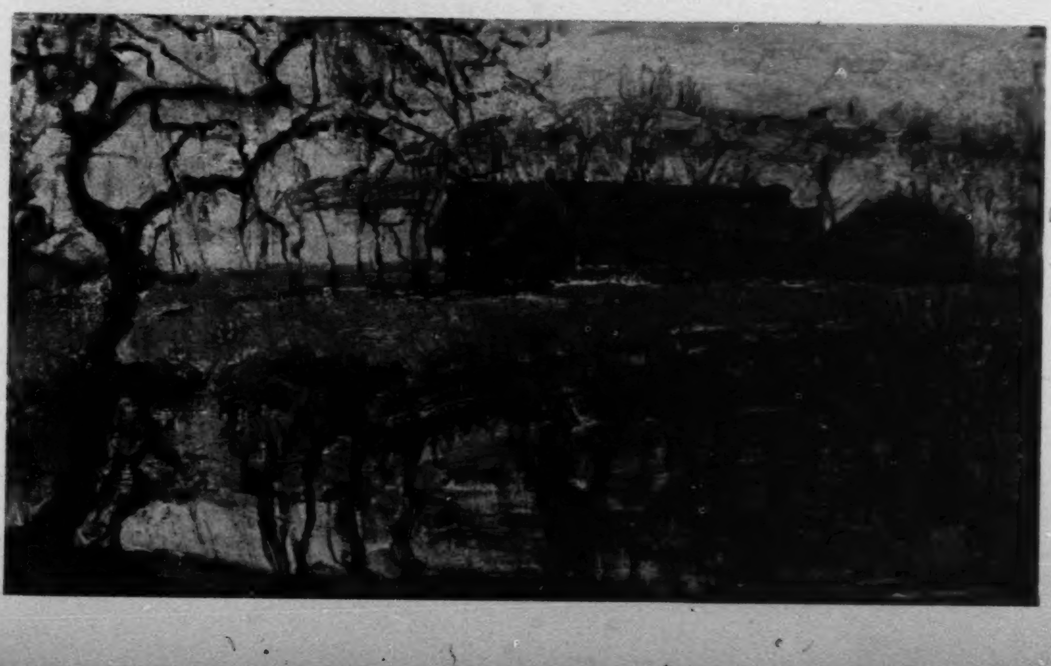


figure 14



47 Mill at Domburg

This is the only windmill in the small community of Domburg on the Island of Walcheren in Zeeland, where Mondrian spent at least part of each year between 1908 and 1912 and apparently again in 1914 (see p. 6). Like the mill in Uden (see no. 26) it served to grind the village grain and is equally prominent as a village landmark. The photograph (fig. 15) shows to what extent Mondrian depicted the details of the actual building, the hedge surrounding the mound of earth upon which the mill was raised, a residual indication of the doorway through which wheat was brought for grinding and the accurate proportions of the structure. The unnatural colours show Mondrian's acceptance of contemporary French influences, but the flat, even brush-work (compare no. 43), the dominant bluish tonality (compare nos. 44, 45a, and 51) and the shaft of brighter evening light coming from the left (compare no. 30), are outgrowths of stylistic qualities found in the *Evening Landscape* period. Partly because of the evening setting, a date of 1908 may be more correct than that of 1909 usually given to it (see GM: 74). Since documents show that Mondrian came to Domburg only in September 1908, this work is evidence of his continuing interest in showing monumental subjects shrouded in the vague light and atmosphere of evening. It also illustrates the continuity of Mondrian's internal stylistic evolution (compare no. 42) and his determination to avoid complete domination by Jan Toorop and the French styles (chiefly Pointillism, *Art Nouveau* and a modified Fauvism) which were then becoming better known in the Netherlands. But it is not only as an art-historical document that this work should be appreciated. The grandeur of form and subtle use of almost pastel-like colour modulations make it one of Mondrian's most sensitive creations during this year of experimentation and transition.

1908

Oil on canvas

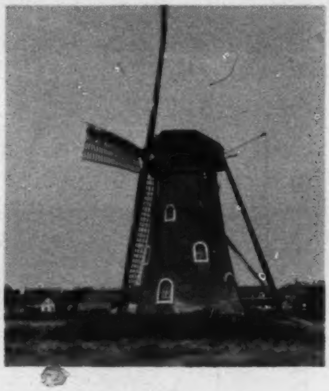
30-1/8 x 25 in., 76.5 x 63.5 cm.

Signed lower right: Piet MONDRIAAN.

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 74

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

figure 15



48 Trees under Blue Sky

The blue and orange colouring in this work bears an unusual resemblance to that in *Red Cloud* (GM: 52), a work often said to show Mondrian's first use of anti-natural colour. However, unless proof of the dating of the latter work in 1907 is forthcoming, neither it nor this work can be given any definite chronological precedence over other works of 1908 in terms of colour innovation. *Trees under Blue Sky* indicates Mondrian's wide experimentation in subject and technique during this crucial period of confrontation with foreign art. Along with the relatively agitated brush-work, one should notice the remarkably flat pictorial design which corresponds to certain sketches from the Cubist period (e.g. S: c.c. 185). This comparison, suggesting only a generic similarity in the trees depicted, illustrates Mondrian's isolation of a vertically oriented tree as a motif at a date close to the beginning of the better known apple tree series.

1908

Oil on canvas

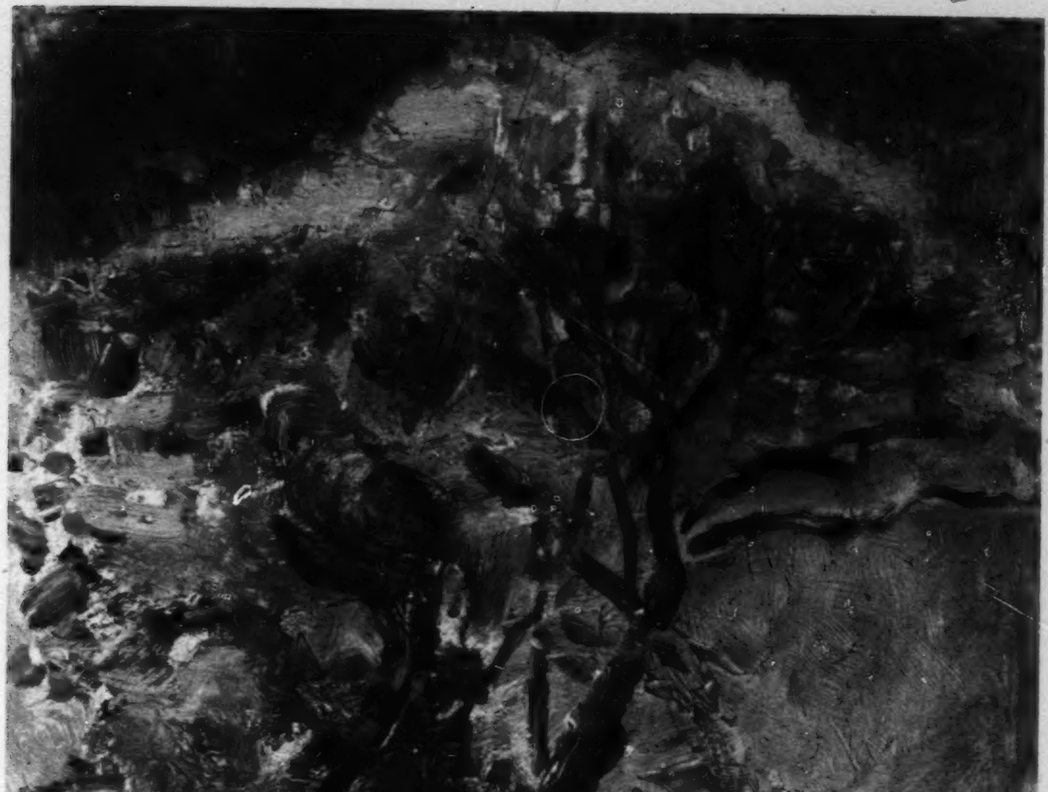
17 x 14 in., 43.1 x 35.5 cm.

Signed lower left: P. MONDRIAAN.

Provenance:
Sidney Janis Gallery after 1956;
to present owner 1963

Exhibitions: New York 1962, no. 9

Mr and Mrs James H. Clark



49 Castle Ruin: Brederode

This work relates iconographically to such earlier ones as *Reformed Church at Winterswijk* (no. 14), although it shows a castle ruin instead of a church. The particular ruin was identified by a former owner of the painting, Mr Folke Heybroek. The same title was suggested independently by A. P. van den Briel, who knew that Mondrian went to this site near Haarlem to work, and by an article in *de Telegraaf*, 17 March 1955, by the late Dutch actor, Louis Saalborn, who took painting lessons from Mondrian *circa* 1910 and recalled having seen Mondrian busy on a series of renditions of this subject at that time. The 1908 dating reflects a feeling that the mixed naturalistic and incipiently Pointillist character of the work is most likely to have come from that transitional year. The spidery quality of the mesh of branches and tree trunks in the foreground recalls certain works of the *Duivendrecht* series (nos. 28 and 29 and see also GM: 35) and also anticipates, in the principle of spatial design, later Cubist works, such as the eucalyptus subject (see especially S: c.c. 202).

It is noteworthy that this setting not only served as the subject of *The Ruins of Brederode Castle*, by the Dutch seventeenth-century painter Hobbema (The National Gallery, London), but also is like that in the famous *Jewish Cemetery* by Jacob van Ruysdael (The Detroit Institute of Arts). It would be unlikely that Mondrian was completely unaware of the use traditionally made of such mediaeval sites by Dutch painters and, whether he knew it or not, Ruysdael's suggestion of the *vanitas* theme of the passage of time is at least indirectly implied in his work. In its combination of mediaevalizing imagery, still essentially Impressionist interest in effects of outdoor lighting and incipiently Pointillist colour and brush technique, this work further illustrates the independence and variety found in Mondrian's art during the seminal year of 1908.

1908

Oil on board

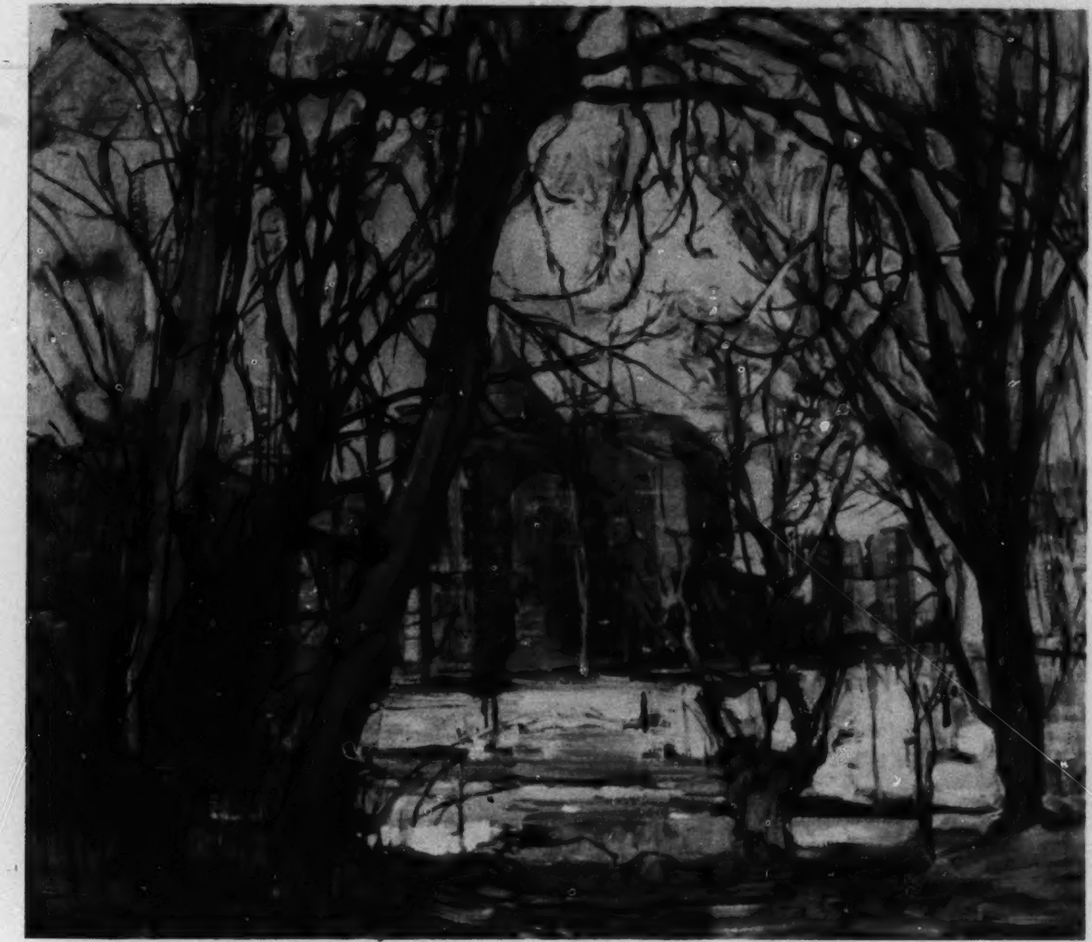
24-1/2 x 28-1/2 in., 62.2 x 72,3 cm.

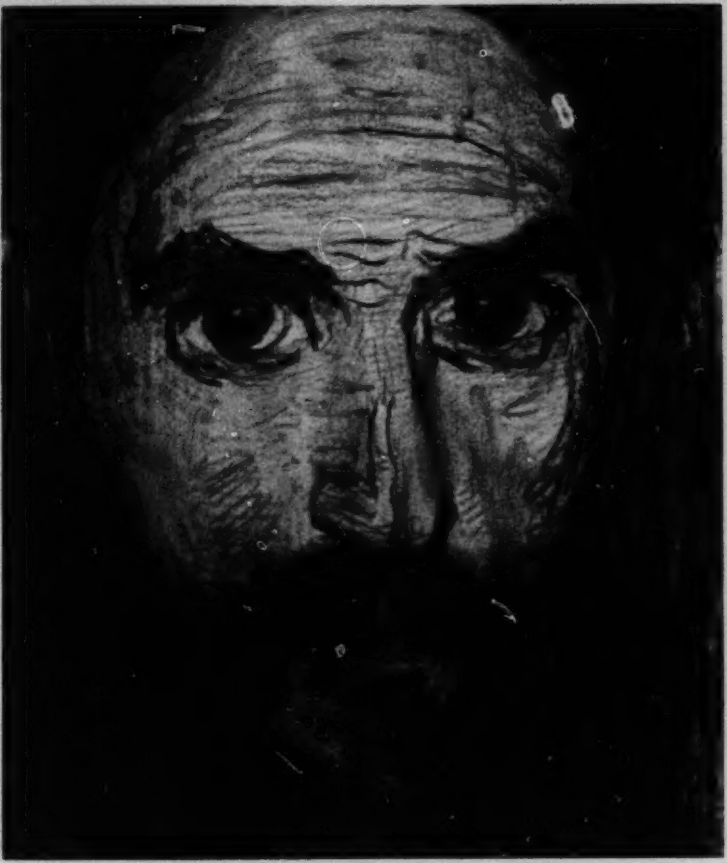
Signed lower right: Piet MONDRIAAN

Provenance:
ex collection Folke Heybroek;
Johann Goedkoop;
to Sidney Janis Gallery *circa* 1962;
to present owner 1963

Exhibitions: New York 1962, no. 8;
Santa Barbara 1965, no. 23

Mr and Mrs James H. Clark





50a Self-portrait: Face

1908-09

Charcoal on paper

11-7/8 x 9-11/16 in., 30 x 24.5 cm.

Signed lower left:
P MONDIAAN *(sic)*

Provenance:
acquired from artist *circa* 1919

Mr S. B. Slijper

←

1908-09

Charcoal on paper

11-7/8 x 10-1/16 in., 30 x 25.5 cm.

Signed upper left: P. MONDRIAAN.

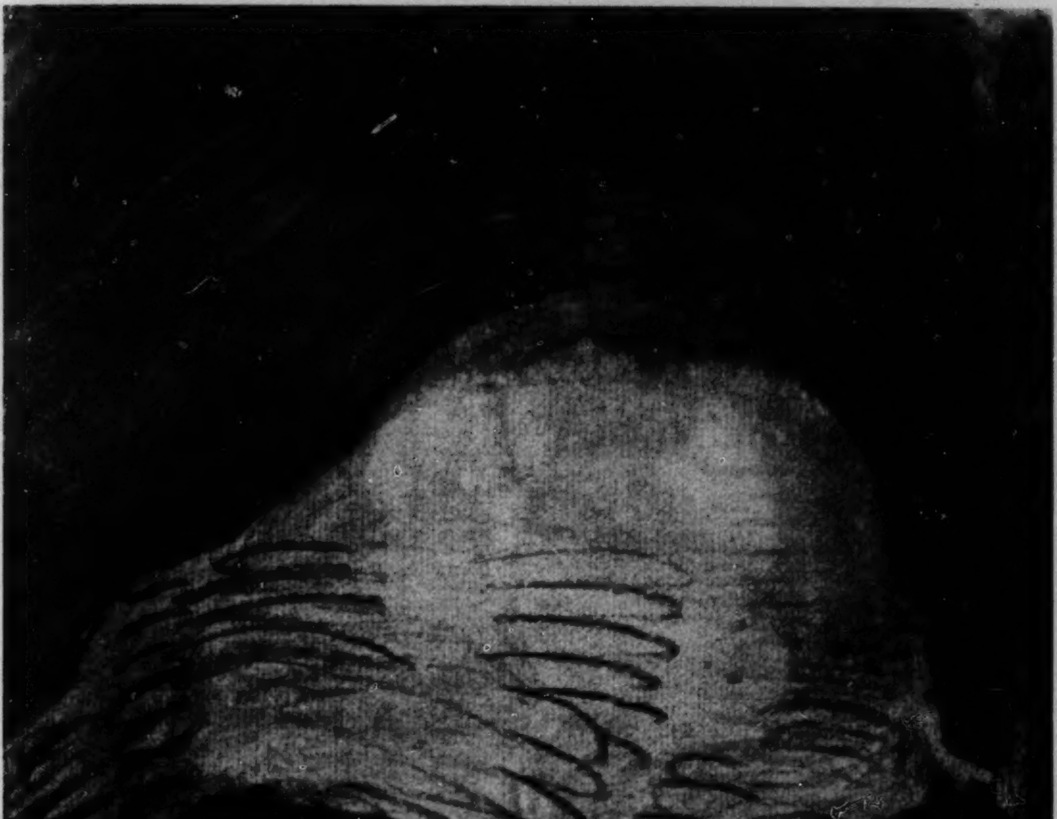
Provenance:
acquired from artist *circa* 1919

Mr S. B. Slijper

→

These two small self-portraits are clearly related in style and iconography to a larger charcoal drawing from the same collection (S: c.c. 2), which includes part of the shoulders as well as the complete head. This in turn is related in its frontal pose and intensely staring eyes to the better known *Self-Portrait* of *circa* 1900 in the Phillips Gallery (S: ill. p. 221, c.c. 1). All four works possess an iconic quality which suggests characteristics of the Fayum funereal portraits of the late Egyptian Empire (a suggestion made to the writer by Professor Robert Rosenblum). Possibly Mondrian was aware of certain habits of mediaeval figural art in which psychological interest was concentrated on the eyes, "the windows of the soul". Similar expressions are found on the crypto-symbolic portraits of young girls from *circa* 1901 (no. 15 and GM: 10), and there is little doubt that Mondrian wished to express a definite spiritual content in these examples.

Secondly, the successive truncation of essentially the same concept of the *Self-Portrait* until only the eyes remain is not fundamentally different from Mondrian's habit, common throughout his career, of selecting details of a natural landscape as motifs to be seen in greater isolation and at closer range for individual treatment (e.g. nos. 24, and 31 to 34). Affinities with other charcoal drawings (e.g. S: c.c. 16 and GM: 111, in which a similar painterly use of the charcoal medium is found), as well as with several photographs of the artist taken in 1908 and 1909 (e.g. S: p. 28, dated October, 1908) point to a date of *circa* 1908 for the three self-portrait charcoal drawings. In all of them, the spiritualized expressions suggest a reawakening within Mondrian's late naturalistic style of a more Symbolist art, probably in part under the influence of a new or renewed interest in Theosophy.



2

The Transition:

In January 1909, a retrospective exhibition of works by Mondrian, Jan Sluyters and C. R. H. Spoor at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, established Mondrian, who was then 36 and who had painted in a naturalistic style for 22 years, as one of the leading modernists in the Netherlands. Some of his works in that exhibition showed the influence of contemporary French art in brush techniques, stylistic mannerisms and a bright palette adapted from the Pointillist, *Art Nouveau* and *Fauve* movements. The exact date and manner of Mondrian's conversion to *avant garde* trends remains partly obscure. He was most immediately indebted to Jan Sluyter's semi-*Fauve* paintings and Jan Toorop's Pointillist works, which he could easily have seen in public exhibitions in Amsterdam. It was only in September 1908 that he went for the first time to Zeeland, where the artistic *milieu* centered around Jan Toorop, who may not have stayed there long enough, however, to have exercised a direct influence on Mondrian then.

Mondrian's transitional works of 1908 maintain an unorthodox individuality in the use of borrowed styles, and his independence continues in his 1909-10 Pointillist phase, his proto-Cubism of 1911-12 and his classic Cubist period of 1912-13. In all three phases he emphasizes non-sculptural painterly values rather than the classical three-dimensional modelling favoured by Seurat, Braque and Picasso.

Mondrian began his first Cubist works before leaving the Netherlands. We know now that he arrived in Paris only in the late winter or spring of 1912 (not in 1910 or late 1911 as was formerly believed). By that time he had seen a few early Cubist works by Braque and

1909-1915

Mondrian in
Lodewijk Schelfhout's
Paris studio *circa* 1912

Picasso in Amsterdam during October and November 1911 at the first exhibition of the *Moderne Kunstkring*, in which he held office. His late analytic Cubism, which he developed in 1912 in Paris, displays a gradually increasing affinity to the 1910-12 works of Braque and Picasso. Although Mondrian's Cubism of 1913 and early 1914 is strongly individual in style and iconography, its relative purity judged by the standards of Braque and Picasso is striking. It seems that by then he felt a need to understand the essence of Cubism before abandoning it, just as he had attempted to explore the ultimate theoretical and expressive possibilities of Pointillism several years earlier.

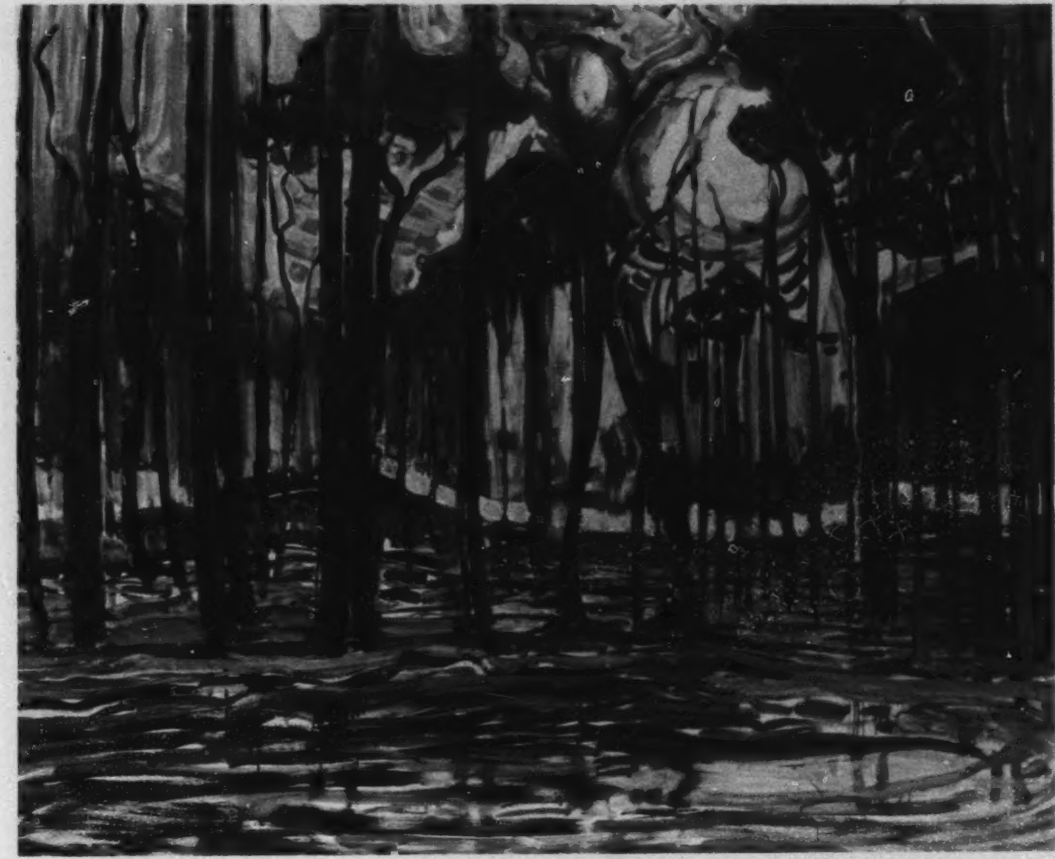
Unlike other Cubists who recapitulated their earlier discoveries in novel forms in a synthetic Cubism, Mondrian slowly abandoned orthodox Paris Cubism to evolve a personal style that became, during and after the First World War, one of the most individual and yet influential expressions of abstract art in Western painting. His few iconographic images became increasingly "abstracting" (to use his own word) and were gradually synthesized into a single image embracing all plastic reality. In 1915-16 Mondrian abandoned subject distinctions between tree, church façade or pier and ocean in favour of purely non-objective compositions "in black-white", "in line" or "in colour". This abstract subject matter was to remain the basic vocabulary of his subsequent search for a more universal form of expression. At the age of 45, Mondrian had finally become a revolutionary force in Western painting.

51 Woods near Oele

The setting for this painting has been identified by A. P. van den Briel, who recalls having visited Mondrian at Oele and seen him working on such a subject. Blok (GM: 65) believes that this large work was executed not at Oele but in Mondrian's Amsterdam studio, a theory given support by a recently discovered smaller version (fig. 16) which could have served as a model for the final canvas. The study was painted in tones of dull brown, mauve and green on an easily transported piece of brownish cardboard and was one of several *plein-air* oil sketches shipped by train from Hengelo to Mondrian's residence in Amsterdam (see no. 38). The small painting on cardboard was apparently the penultimate compositional synthesis from several other studies of woods (e.g. the drawing *Woods near Oele* [GM: 39], which shows a configuration of trees resembling those in the right half of the large canvas), and was the basis for the major painting in a quite different colour scheme.

Blok's further suggestion that this work was probably in the Amsterdam 1909 Stedelijk exhibition can now be substantiated, but his belief that it had possibly already been shown as no. 319, *Avond (Evening)*, in the *St. Lucas* spring exhibition of 1908 seems less certain. The title *Avond* was given to numerous exhibition contributions by Mondrian during the years between 1903 and 1909, and there are many works fitting this general description and of a size to justify the high price of 800 guilders. Moreover, in his extended description of this work in an article on the Amsterdam 1909 Stedelijk exhibition *(de Controleur,* May 29, 1909), a sympathetic critic, Israel Querido, calls it *"May Morning"* and describes its symbolic content and its use of bright colours in exultant terms as a veritable victory of the cosmic forces of light over those of fear and darkness. Although Mondrian's answer to Querido (*de Controleur,* October 23, 1909; shortly to be published in English translation by the present writer) refers to *"May Morning"* as "named by you", he thanks Querido for his beautiful description and seems satisfied with the critic's interpretation of it as representing a crucial turning point in his stylistic evolution and as indicating a conscious search for a more direct and expressive personal style.

Several writers have described this work as embodying *Art Nouveau* and *Fauve* principles of style, but no work by van Gogh, Munch, Jan Toorop or Jan Sluyters has been cited as a specific source for this unique and visionary painting. The undeniable debt of the colour scheme to *Fauve* or Pointillist precedents (as represented by Toorop and Sluyters in the *St. Lucas* exhibition of 1908; see Terpstra, pp. 66-69) does not fully account for the dominant blue tonality which relates this work to Mondrian's *Blue Tree* series. Nor are the long, sweeping brush strokes merely a technique adopted from foreign sources, since they can also be seen as elaborations of tendencies in the *Blue Tree* series and in other Impressionist works from the late naturalistic period (e.g. nos. 38 and 45b). *Woods near Oele* comprises a rich synthesis of elements from Mondrian's past work and such forward-looking elements as the use of unmixed colour, the opposition of vertical and horizontal lines and the implied content of jubilant hope and life. More than any other work, it represents in his career what *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* represents for Picasso.



1908

Oil on canvas

50-7/16 x 62-1/4 in., 128 x 158 cm.

Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN.

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 65; in addition, this work
was exhibited in Amsterdam 1909,
Stedelijk, and Brussels 1909, no. 81

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

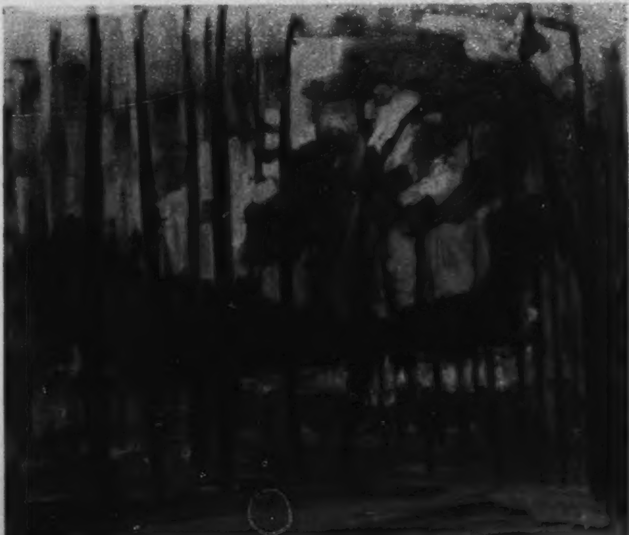


figure 16

52 Haystacks I

This work is one of three small versions of the same subject which form a series somewhat in the manner of Claude Monet. All three were in the Amsterdam 1909 Stedelijk exhibition, where they were shown as a unit. There they attracted the attention of the important Dutch critic, W. Steenhoff (*De Amsterdammer*, 31 January 1909), who spoke of them as "forming a cycle", and as "objects rendered in their changing appearance according to the nature of three different conditions of weather". He then described each in terms of the time of day represented: I) a conflagration of colour is ignited by the blood-red sunset; II) the colour becomes clear, even and toneless after the sun sets; there remains an aura of pink tints and bright light; III) seen later in the evening, now sombre and blackish, the haystacks become a massive ghostly silhouette and the atmosphere, as if chastised by a hailstorm, momentarily clears before night falls. The analogy with Claude Monet is obvious, although Mondrian may have been inspired by reproductions or word of mouth, rather than by direct knowledge of Monet's haystack series; but Mondrian's technique in all three paintings was equally influenced by Pointillism. In fact, along with *Windmill in Sunlight* (no. 53), these works document Mondrian's gradual acceptance of Pointillist style by the beginning of 1909. Steenhoff analyses the series as proceeding from sunset to late evening, but, from an historical point of view, Mondrian's development was in the opposite direction, from the period of the *Evening Landscapes* to an intense experience of sunlight. *Haystacks III* (fig. 18) consequently preserves the longer sweeping brush strokes of the *Evening Landscape* period and the greenish naturalistic colouring of Mondrian's earlier work, while what is probably *Haystacks II* (fig. 17) comes closest to Pointillist brush strokes and colouring. The examples in this exhibition employs a brush technique similar to that in *Windmill in Sunlight*, to which it is also related in its orange colour symbolic of intense fiery sunlight. The rounded mass of the haystacks seems, from close by, to be flattened out against the surface of the painting; but when seen from a distance, the perspective falls remarkably well into a normal sense of spatial depth.

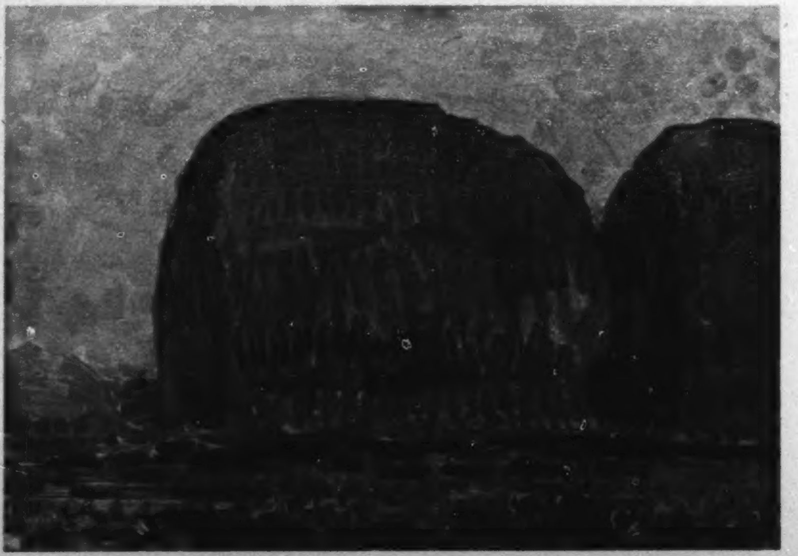


figure 17

1908

Oil and canvas (remounted on board)

13-1/2 x 17-1/4 in., 34.2 x 43.8 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance:

Mrs G. A. Ootmar *circa* 1910

Exhibitions:

Amsterdam 1909, Stedelijk

Mr and Mrs Cornelius Ootmar

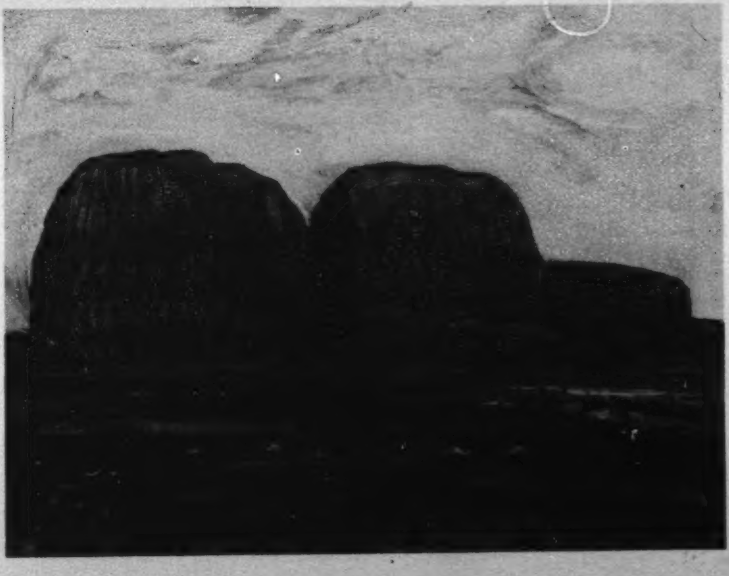


figure 18

53 Windmill in Sunlight

Like the stylistically related *Haystacks* series (no. 52), *Windmill in Sunlight* was in the Amsterdam 1909 Stedelijk exhibition. There it attracted the attention of reviewers (see GM: 72) who were at a loss to explain its peculiar stylistic character and reacted critically to it. A recently discovered second version in oil (J. H. Clark collection; see New York 1963, no. 15), shows Mondrian's familiarity with Pointillism at this period, but the brush-work of the exhibited version is less Pointillist and appears to be based equally on a now lost preparatory drawing (fig. 19).

Mondrian has in this work eschewed classic Pointillist usage by evolving a colour scheme which, despite a large variety of nuances and tones, depends upon the primary colours, red, blue and yellow. This scheme still refers to the natural setting, since the blue and yellow occur properly in the sky, and some reviewers related the red to a blinding experience of intense sunlight. But this work also anticipates Mondrian's later preoccupation with the basic primary colours and shows that his search for essentials of colour and form was already well under way at the time of his adoption of contemporary French styles of painting.

Finally, it should be noted that the windmill represented was the *wipmolen* type, found near Amsterdam, but not at all on the dry Island of Walcheren where water-pumping mills are not needed. Consequently, Mondrian's first trip to Zeeland, like his stays in Brabant and Twente, should not be considered a precondition for his conversion to a radically modern style of painting.

1908

Oil on canvas

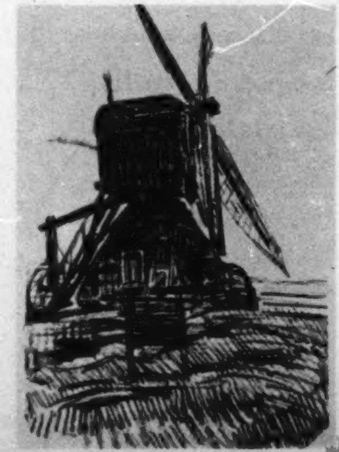
44-7/8 x 34-1/4 in., 114 x 87 cm.

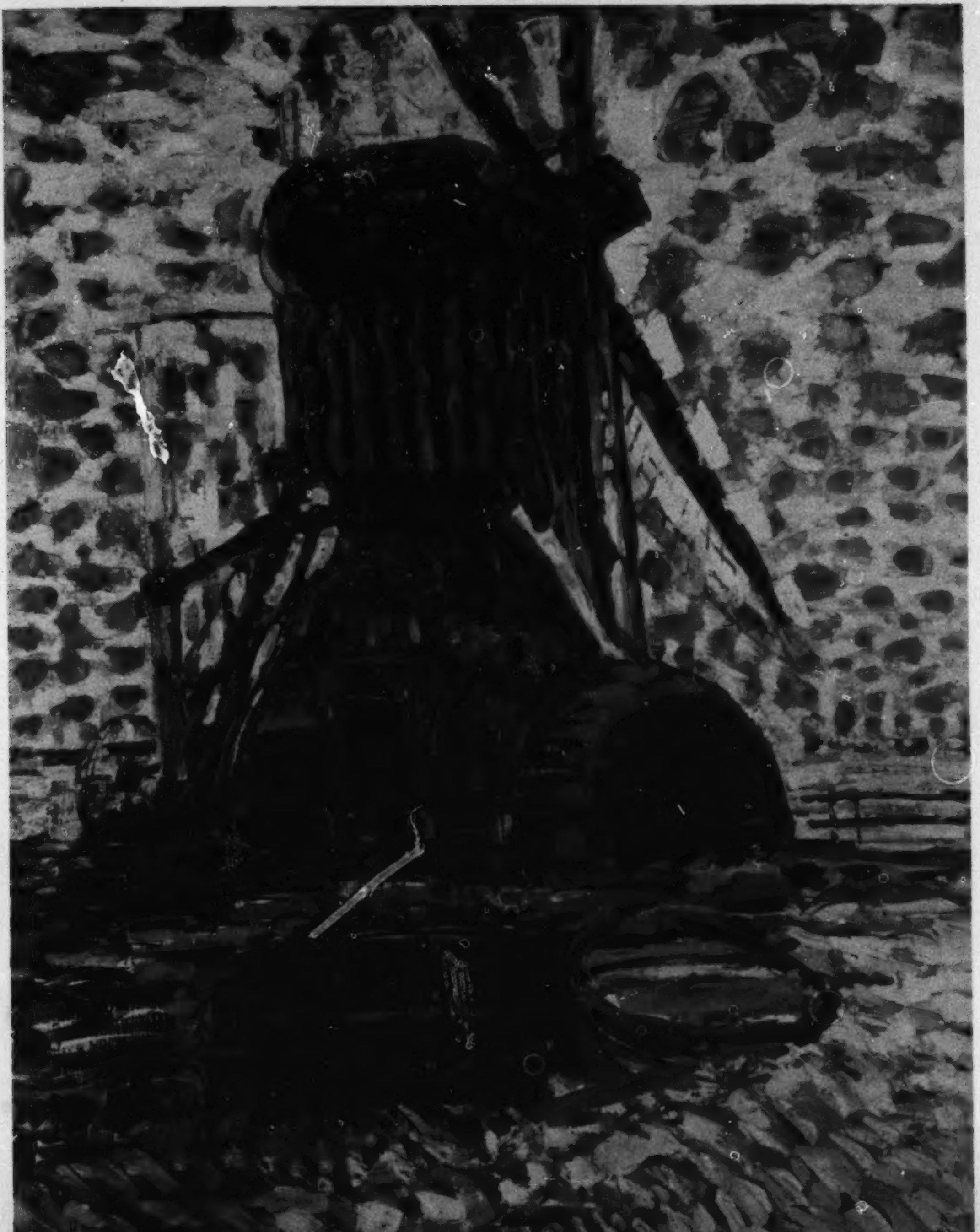
Signed lower right:
PIET MONDRIAAN.

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 72

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

figure 19





54 Red Tree

Blok has shown (GM: p. 22) that this work was in the Amsterdam 1909 Stedelijk exhibition and must have been done in 1908 rather than later, as was formerly assumed. Some *retardataire* influence of Vincent van Gogh (whose major retrospective exhibitions in Amsterdam were in 1892 and 1905) does not obscure the independent qualities of style which derive from Mondrian's earlier work. Not only was the spider-web network of branches anticipated earlier (compare nos. 29 and 49), but the linear flatness of the tree image and an impulsive brush-work were already present in *Winter Landscape* (no. 46).

Moreover, the colour, as in *Windmill in Sunlight* (no. 53), is limited to the use of basic primaries. David Lewis (Lewis p. 10) has discussed the symbolism of the blue and red colour dualism. He quotes from Mondrian's later essays to show that the blue was meant to counterbalance the "tragic" effect of the red. In this respect, the work should be considered a member of the *Blue Tree* series in which red has been added for expressive and symbolic reasons. Its title, *Evening,* when exhibited publicly in 1910, permits us to identify the circle in the upper right as a hidden or painted-over moon, like those found in *Trees on the Gein: Moonrise* (no. 34), the drawing *Trees bordering a River* (no. 35) and *Summer Night (no. 40).* Mondrian here tries to balance any van-Gogh-like emotion of anxiety with his own emphasis on evening repose found in so much of his work of 1908.

1908

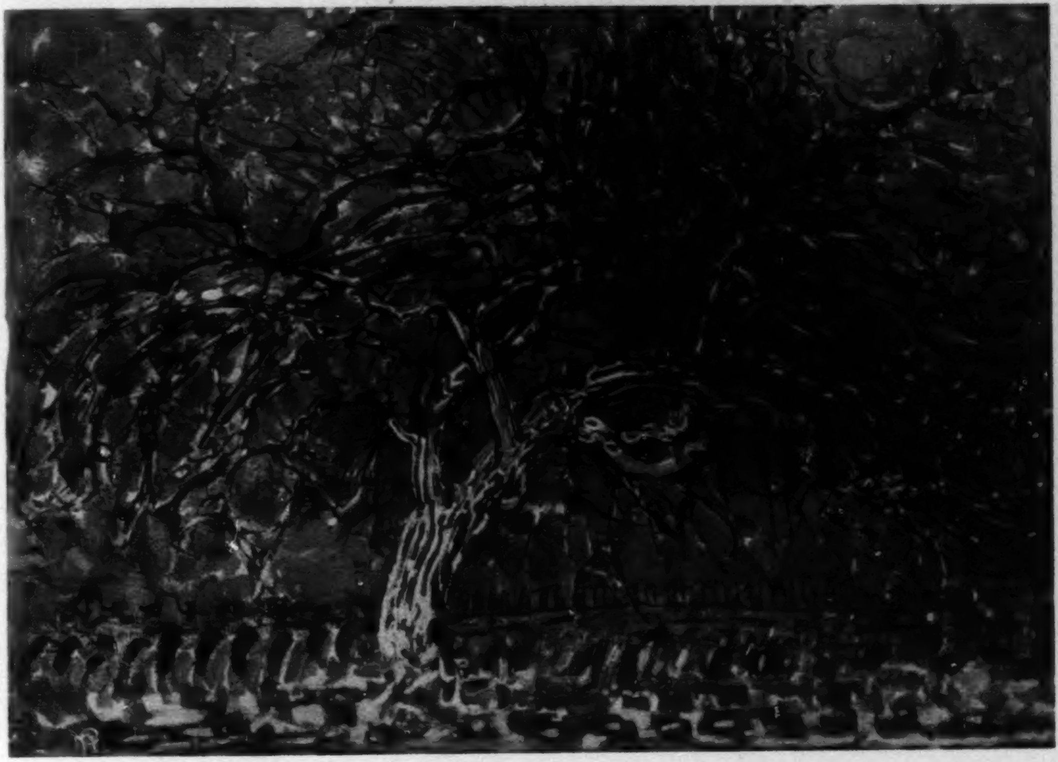
Oil on canvas

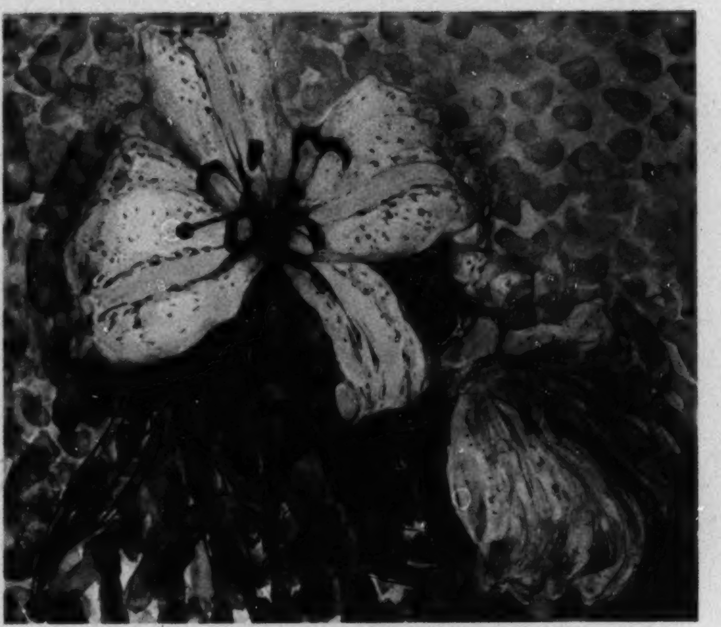
27-5/8 x 39 in., 70 x 99 cm.

Signed lower left: PM
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 73

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague





55 Tiger Lily

1909

Water colour on paper

15-3/8 x 17-3/8 in., 39 x 44 cm.

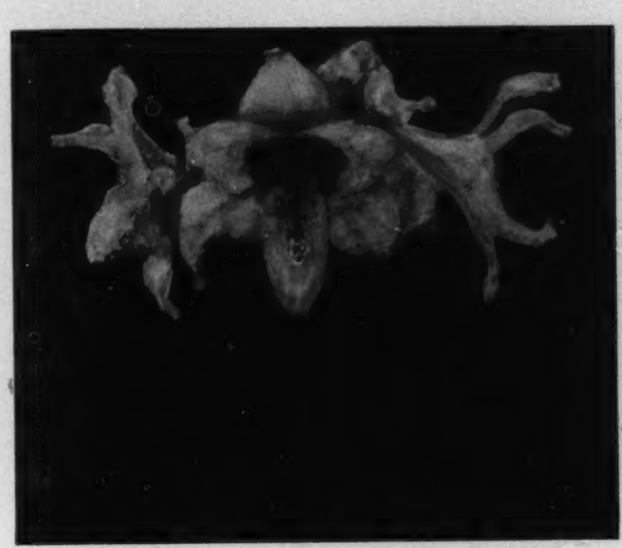
Signed lower right: PM.
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance: bought from the
St. Lucas exhibition 1910 by
H. N.; to present owner 1958

Exhibitions:
Amsterdam 1909, *Arti*(?) no. 126;
Amsterdam 1910, no. 489

Mrs A. C. H. W. Smid-Verlee

This water colour was one of several flower pictures shown at the spring *St. Lucas* exhibition of 1910, but in style it seems typical of works executed the previous summer in Zeeland. It, or a preparatory charcoal drawing (GM: 104), was probably the *Lily* shown at the *Arti* drawing and water colour exhibition of late 1909. The splotchy Pointillist technique and the primary colour scheme, here largely blue and yellow with a few red dots on the leaves, relate this work to *Windmill in Sunlight* (no. 53) and the water colour version of *Blue Tree* (GM: 101). As in *Dying Chrysanthemum* (no. 45b), there is a certain sense of the transience of the flower's life; the second blossom in the lower right is especially similar in form and expression to the earlier work. Although *Tiger Lily* can be seen as a late manifestation of *Art Nouveau* thinking (compare James fig. 11), Mondrian's own artistic temperament is responsible for the exclusive use of primary colours, the large scale of the flower image and the tendency to flatten the composition on the picture plane with brush-work which denies any real feeling for rounded plastic form.



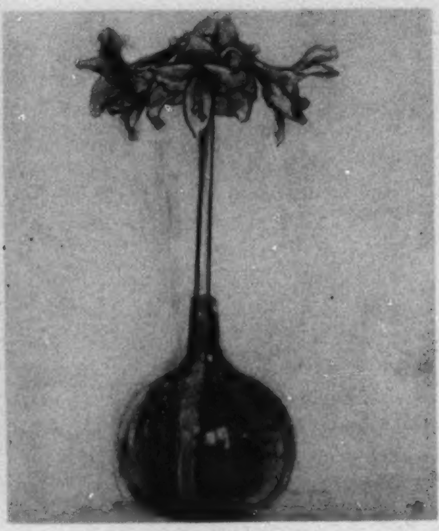


figure 20

56 Amaryllis

1910

Water colour on paper

15-3/8 x 19-5/16 in., 39 x 49 cm.

Signed lower right: PM.
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance: bought from the
St. Lucas exhibition 1910 by
H. N.; to present owner 1958

Exhibitions:
Amsterdam 1910, no. 490

Mrs A. C. H. W. Smid-Verlee

This water colour can be considered a companion piece to *Tiger Lily* (no. 55). The bold sense of scale, frontal composition and use of primary colours, in this case blue and red, suggest that Mondrian submitted the two drawings to the 1910 *St. Lucas* exhibition as a pair. Although the intensity of the colours is comparable, the more even application and deeper resonance of the colours in *Amaryllis* represent an essential difference between it and the Pointillist works such as *Tiger Lily* which dominated the exhibition of 1910 and seem to date mostly from the previous year. *Amaryllis* thus anticipates the type of work shown in the *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition of autumn 1911 (e.g. no. 59) and, with the possible exception of *Dune V* (no. 61, see GM: 107, 108 and pp. 23-25), may be considered the most advanced work that Mondrian included in the 1910 *St. Lucas* exhibition.

Amaryllis also summarizes the concept of the flower treated frontally in a centrally balanced composition. In this respect it parallels *Arum Lily* (GM: 93), which was no. 485 in the 1910 *St. Lucas* exhibition, and very likely the work of which Mondrian said in 1915, after discussing *Dying Chrysanthemum* (no. 45b), "Later I found too much emotion in this work and painted a blue flower differently. This stood stiffly staring and already promised more of the immutable" (quoted in Sweeney p. 4). *Amaryllis* could also be characterized in this manner. A similar composition and placement of the flower are found in a related drawing (fig. 20), where a rigidly vertical stem is given fuller compositional prominence but essentially differs little from the stems of *Amaryllis* and *Arum Lily*.

57 Church at Zoutelande

Despite references to the churches represented in the 1910 *St. Lucas* exhibition as *Domburg* (*Kunstchronik*, XXI, 1910, pp. 490-92) and even *Katwijk* (*De Kunst*, VII, 1915, pp. 250-53), the signature and date on this work and other review notices (see Terpstra p. 77 and N. H. Wolf, *De Kunst*, II, 1910, pp. 14-15) make it likely that no. 481, *Zomermorgen*, was this work. Wolf admits that he had not grasped the artist's intention until Mondrian himself interpreted it, but explains that Mondrian's Pointillist technique was consciously used to create specific stylistic and expressive effects. He reports that Mondrian wished to suggest the difference between the lighted and shadowed side of the church by contrasting red-orange with red-blue. Although he feels that Mondrian's intention to show the shadowed side achieves dubious success and criticizes Mondrian's dependence on natural science, which discovered that the juxtaposition of strong non-complementary colours produces a vibrating visual sensation, he does grant that Mondrian has created this sense of glowing colours.

Mondrian in fact achieved a unique fusion of French Impressionist and Divisionist styles, using colour combinations and a painterly brush technique to produce a highly original and novel work. *Church at Zoutelande* directly links the earlier stage in his evolution represented by *Windmill in Sunlight* (no. 53) with *Church at Domburg* (GM: 109) of 1910-11, in which Mondrian treats another Zeeland church as an essential flat façade. There the vibrations of colour and light contrasts are largely, but not completely, suppressed in keeping with the colour usage of his immediately pre-Cubist period (see also no. 59).

1909-10

Oil on canvas

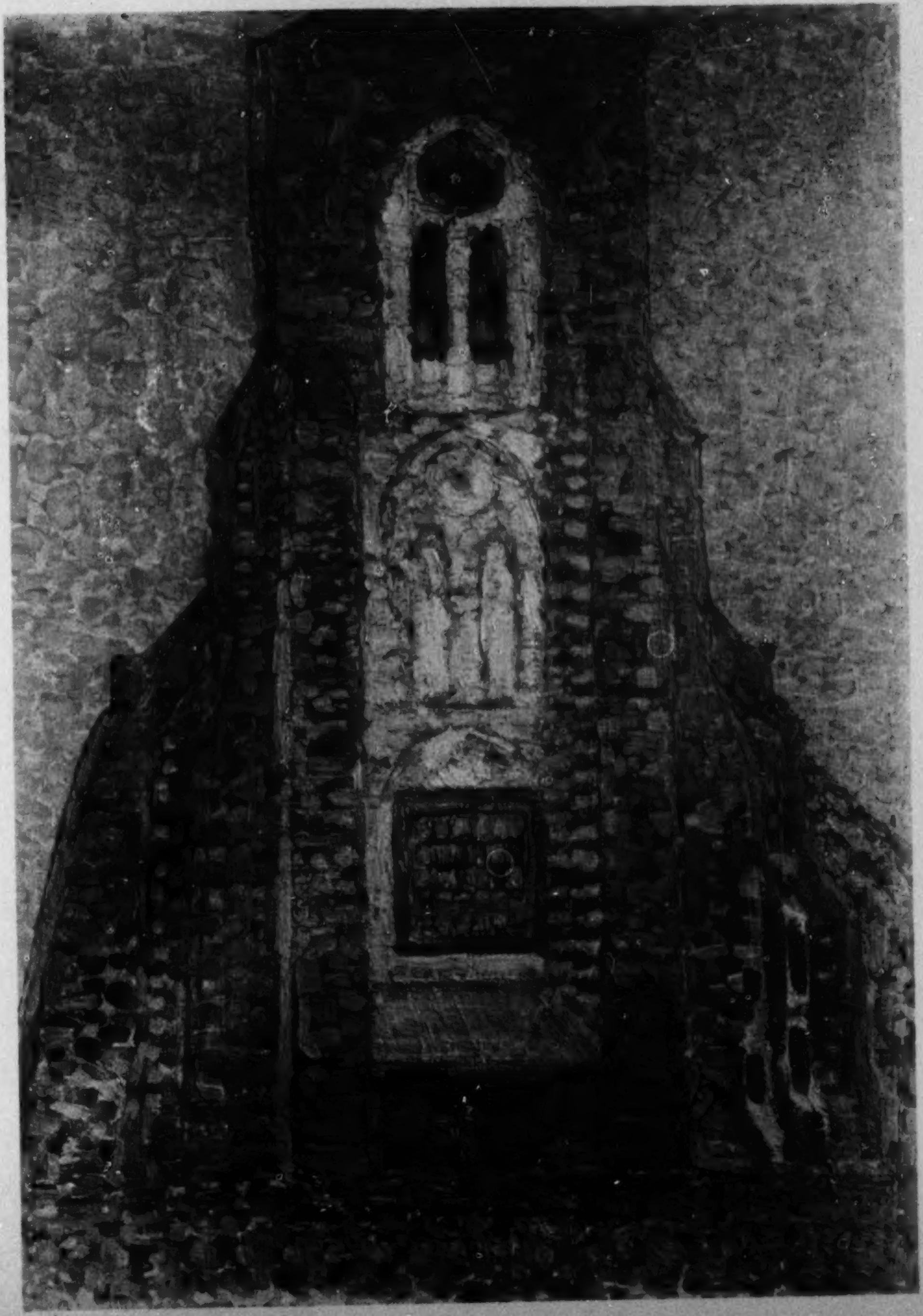
35-3/4 x 24-1/2 in., 90.7 x 62.2 cm.

Signed lower left: PM 1910
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance: acquired *circa* 1911
from the artist by M. J. Heybroek;
to present owner at Parke-Bernet,
21 March 1962 (cat. 2096, no. 94)

Exhibitions:
Amsterdam 1910, no. 481 (?);
Amsterdam 1946, no. 42;
The Hague 1955, no. 38

Mrs Phyllis Lambert



58 Dunes and Sea

This is one of several Pointillist oil studies of the dunes and sea near Domburg (e.g. S: c.c. 208, 210 and 212) in unusual combinations of tinted colours and varied brush strokes. The view suggests that Mondrian placed himself on top of the dunes and painted them from a location near that chosen for the drawing *Dunes and Sea* (no. 62a), but looking in an opposite direction along the coast. Because of the mixture of styles, this painting is difficult to date exactly. The long undulating horizontal brush strokes are reminiscent of those in *Woods near Oele* (no. 51), but an underlying structure fortified by the parallel rows of piers extending from the beach into the sea at the right implies a more systematic order than is typical of Mondrian's transitional works of 1908. As is true of much of his production during the years when he was visiting Zeeland, the spatial setting of the painting comes into focus only after some concentrated observation and preferably when seen from a distance. The vibrating effect of colour is analogous to that in *Church at Zoutelande* (no. 57).

1909-10

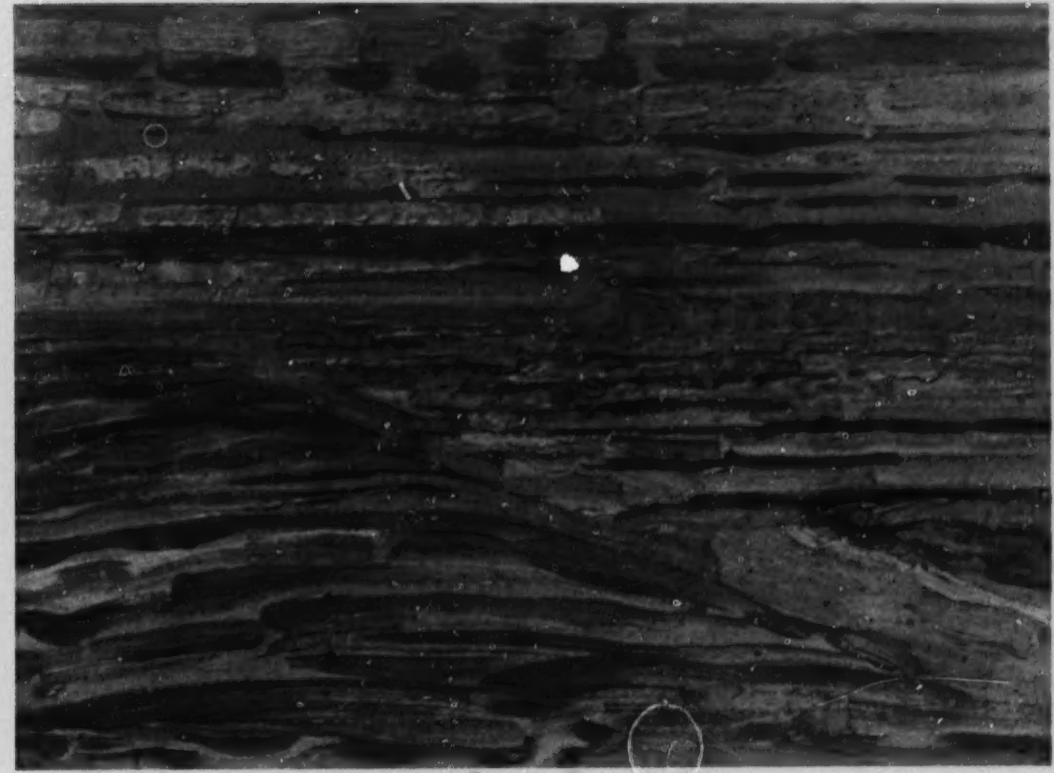
Oil on cardboard

11-1/4 x 15-3/16 in., 28.5 x 38.5 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance:
ex collection Dr J. F. S. Esser;
to present owner at auction
circa 1948

Private collection, the Netherlands



59 The Red Mill

1911

Oil on canvas

59-1/8 x 33-7/8 in., 150 x 86 cm.

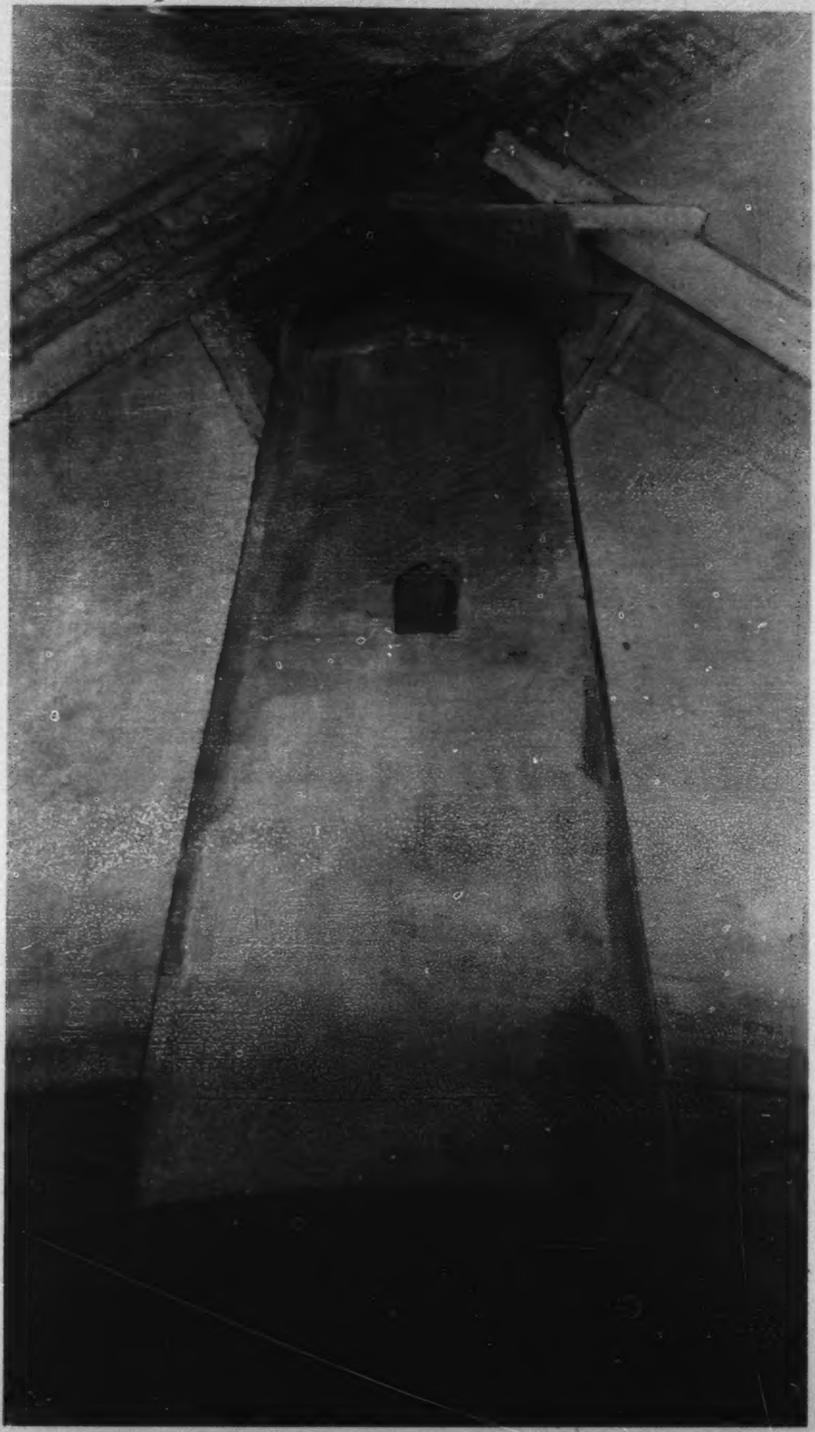
Signed lower left: PM
(superimposed monogram)

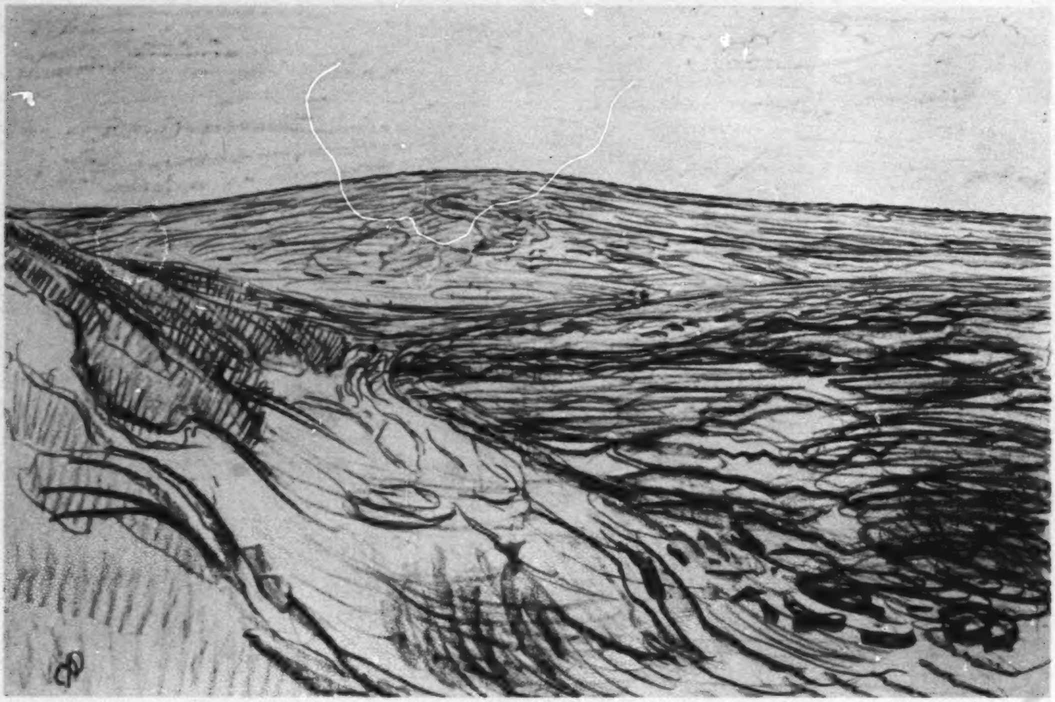
Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 110

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

Although not identifiable through any peculiarities of marking or architecture, the mill is of a type commonly found in Zeeland and is probably the one at Domburg (no. 47 and fig. 15). In style this work can be considered transitional to Cubism because of the geometric design, triangulated plane divisions in the foreground and unmodulated colours. Mondrian has preserved the proportions of the mill while giving it a monumental scale which frees the building from any specific relation to the surrounding landscape. He has also preserved an allusion to natural appearance in the colour of the red brick and the blue sky, as well as through suggestions of modelling with light and shadow derived from his earlier *plein-air* experience. *The Red Mill* typifies the style of the six works included in the first *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition in the autumn of 1911, where, apparently for the first time, he saw Cubist works by Braque and Picasso.

Apart from the proto-Cubist aspect, the scale can be related to a search for monumentality in contemporary work of Dutch painters such as Jan Toorop and Willem van Konijnenberg. It is also closely related in iconography and style to Mondrian's large triptych, *Evolution* (S: ill. p. 237, c.c. 26/27); the upward stare of the mill is comparable to the stares of the lateral figures in the triptych, and the trunk of the mill suggests anthropomorphic form just as the trunks of the figures appear partially metamorphosed into non-organic matter. Although not yet documented, the influence of Theosophic thinking on these works seems likely.





60 Dunes at Domburg

This work is identified by an exhibition label on the reverse which is inscribed, in Mondrian's own hand, *"P. Mondriaan Duinen bij Domburg"*. A date, which seems first to have been 1912, then to have been changed to 1911, is added. Stylistically, this work predates Mondrian's trip to Paris and his irreversible adoption of Cubism. The subject conforms closely to two paintings of *Dunes* (no. 61 and GM: 108), although the drawing includes a broader foreground area. The flowing linear contours of the drawing evoke the sense of pictorial harmony characteristic of the paintings. Its monumental scale, despite its modest size, relates it to paintings exhibited in the 1911 *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition in Amsterdam. Only when it is seen from a distance does the spatial depth come into focus, and even then there is no absolute scale, since it is difficult for the viewer to relate himself to the actual setting. The undulating dune contours also suggest the iconography of female forms that Mondrian would use more systematically in the Cubist *Nude: Dunes and Sea* (no. 65) of 1912.

1911

Charcoal on paper

17-9/16 x 26-3/4 in., 44.6 x 67.8 cm.

Signed lower left: PM
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance:
acquired from the artist *circa*
1912 by Miss W. de Sitter;
to present owner by inheritance

Exhibitions:
Domburg 1912, no. 52 (?)

Dr L. U. de Sitter

61 Dune V

1909-10

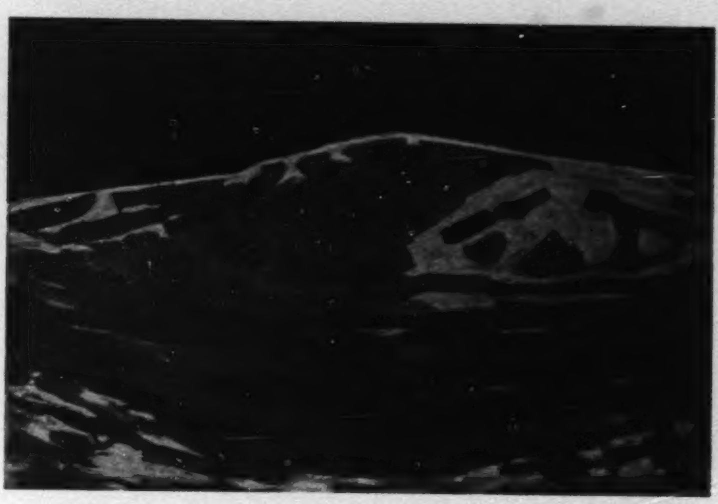
Oil on canvas

25-7/8 x 37-13/16 in., 65.5 x 96 cm.

Signed lower right: PM.
(superimposed monogram)

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 107

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague



Blok (GM: p. 23) has identified this work as *Summer, Dune in Zeeland,* no. 479 at the 1910 *St. Lucas* exhibition, for which the high price of 1,000 guilders was asked. The only other *Dune* painting of comparable size, an even larger copy (GM: 108), seems slightly more advanced in style and could have been at the Paris 1911 *Independents* exhibition or the Amsterdam 1911 *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition, or both. Blok's hypothesis can now be supported by several newspaper reviews; "Giovanni" (pseudonym for J. Kalff, *Algemeen Handelsblad,* 3 May 1910) refers to *Summer, Dune in Zeeland* as "the large piece in the middle", and C. L. Dake *(De Telegraaf,* 6 May 1910) first attacks the work as "literally invisible and unenjoyable" but adds, "the large painting . . . which I viewed from a distance of 6 to 8 metres, must be studied, I calculated today, from a distance of 38 metres. Then one actually perceives the luminous dune crescent with the filled-in shadow areas and the land stretched out in front [*afgeschreven shadeuwkanten en den voorgestrekten grond*]. Then one easily sees the blue sea with the summer sky above." Although Dake, like other reviewers, criticizes this work for its chemical and optical effects derived from natural science, his admonition to view it from a distance contains a valuable insight. In this work, Mondrian has returned to the late Impressionist brush-work of his *Evening Landscape* period, and his sense of compositional structure has become more monumental. He has also purified his iridescent Pointillist colour spectrum without sacrificing an intense appreciation of the radiant optical effects of bright sunlight on natural form.

Dunes and Sea

The subject of these drawings, and of several others which were originally part of the same sketch book, is a lateral view along the beach near Domburg. Mondrian's naturalistic style is purified in this series of sketches into sparse compositions of predominantly horizontal lines (see especially S: c.c. 205 and 209). Nonetheless, a quite striking sense of perspective depth is preserved and even extended towards an infinitely distant horizon.

The "Mondrian" spelling of the signature is in a pencil medium differing from that of the drawing itself and indicating that these works were signed and dated after their actual execution, probably only when Mondrian extracted these pages from the sketch books during his last years in New York. By then, Mondrian held the mistaken belief that his first trip to Paris had occurred in 1910 rather than in 1912 as can now be documented (see p. 7). The 1909 dates on no. 62a, S: c.c. 205 and a third version at the Marlborough Gallery thus involve an error of approximately two years. The von Wiegand example is especially important in this context as the most descriptively complete and presumably earliest member of the series. Its style, related closely to the large *Dune Landscape* (GM: 113) which is clearly a penultimate pre-Paris work, and to *Nude: Dunes and Sea* (no. 65), makes it an important document for the dating of this sketch book and many other works of the immediately pre-Cubist period in the summer or autumn of 1911.

62a

1911

Crayon on paper

4-1/8 x 6-3/4 in., 10.5 x 17.2 cm.

Signed lower left:
PIET MONDRIAN 1909

Provenance: given by the artist
to present owner *circa* 1944

Exhibitions: Basel 1964-65, no. 24

Miss Charmion von Wiegand

62b

1910-11

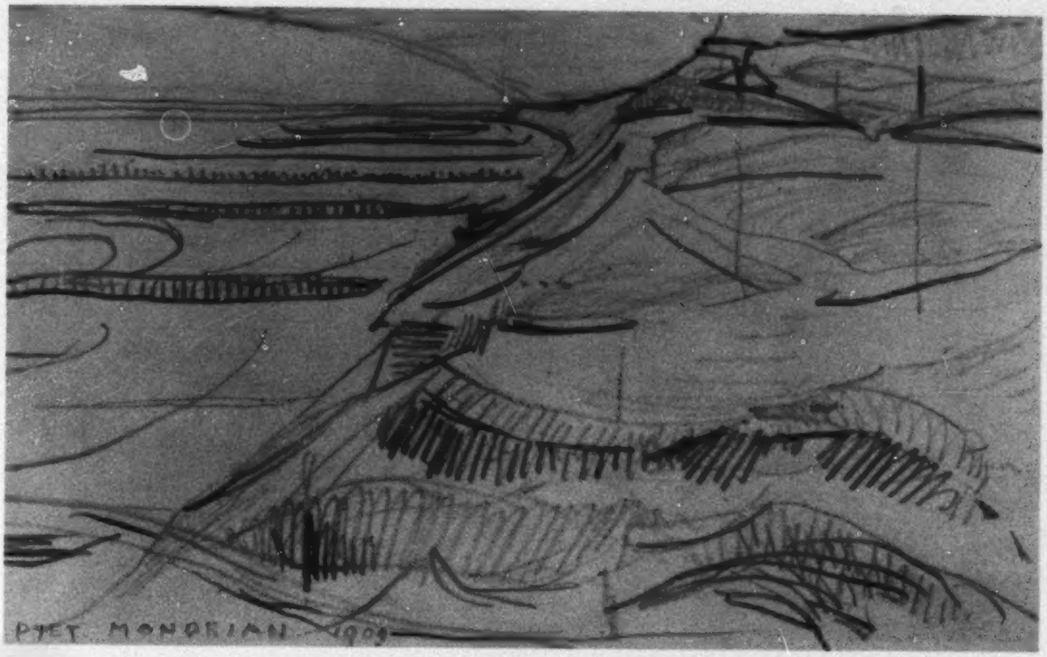
Crayon on paper

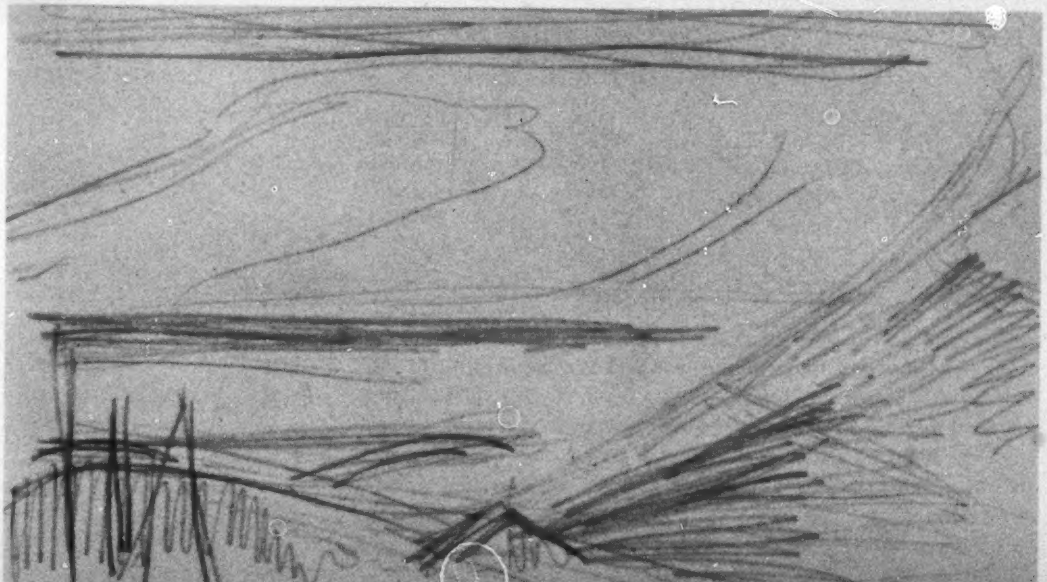
4-1/8 x 6-3/4 in., 10.5 x 17.2 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: with Mondrian estate
to Harry Holtzman;
to present owner *circa* 1964

Marlborough Fine Art Ltd.,
London


PIET MONDRIAN 1909



63 Still Life with Ginger Pot I

1911-12

Oil on canvas

25-13/16 x 29-9/16 in., 65.5 x 75 cm.

Signed lower right: P MONDRIAN.

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 118

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

Although Mondrian signed his name with a single "a", it is possible that this signature was added later, and that the work was actually begun while he was still in the Netherlands (see GM: 119 and pp. 25-26 and Blok p. 38). This assumption is based on the fact that Mondrian returned the ginger pot represented to his friend A. P. van den Briel before leaving for Paris and on the descriptive completeness of this work compared with Mondrian's other Cubist paintings. In a recently discovered letter, postmarked 26 August 1912, Mondrian wrote to his friend Conrad Kikkert that he was still at work on "the still life". This must have been the stylistically more advanced version (GM: 119) which was probably no. 156 in the *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition held in Amsterdam in the autumn of 1912. *Still Life with Ginger Pot I* is one of Mondrian's earliest paintings executed in a Cubist style. Its touches of purple and blue, reminiscent of the colours of several slightly earlier works (e.g. no. 59 and GM: 109 and 113), differ radically from the brown or tan monochromes of the 1910-12 paintings of Braque and Picasso, which he would have seen only in Paris and which influenced his own colour conceptions only towards the end of 1912 (see nos. 70 and 71).

The turquoise colouring of the ginger pot in this and the second version is remarkably close to the colour of the original Oriental earthenware, and the objects on the table are similarly easy to identify. The subject matter and implied iconography is traditionally Dutch and somewhat unsophisticated when compared to the guitars, pitchers and newspaper print, the *genre* subjects which Braque and Picasso treated consistently as material for visual *double entendre*. Mondrian here selected objects which he found close at hand or related to his everyday life in the *atelier*. We find pots, pans, books, an ink stand, tumblers, a plate, a piece of cheese and knife on the table cloth, a candle in the right background and perhaps an artist's portfolio in front of the window on the left. The symmetrical round contours of the ginger pot (a common household object in the Netherlands because of that country's colonial interests in Indonesia) and the choice of subject matter recall the 1893 *Still Life: Herring* (no. 6) and the "breakfast pieces" of the great seventeenth-century still life painters. Mondrian's subject matter and iconography thus remained basically dependent on Dutch tradition, even as he gladly accepted the stylistic inspiration and anti-naturalistic bias of the Paris Cubist movement.

64 Landscape with Trees

One authority (Terpstra pp. 157-58) has dated the work to as late as 1913; but the relatively random character of the background grid into which the two prominent tree images (compare those in GM: 114) are not organically fused, as they would be in Mondrian's later finished Cubist paintings, supports the usual identification of this as one of Mondrian's first Cubist canvases. The floating vertical accents within a system of rounded or triangulated contours indicates its relation to the drawing *Nude: Dunes and Sea* (no. 65); and in the major canvases of 1911 (e.g. no. 59, GM: 109, 112 and 113), elements of brushwork, design and colour anticipate *Landscape with Trees*. Apart from a general debt (e.g. in the foreground tree trunk forms) to works by Braque *circa* 1908-09, which were present in the *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition of 1911, the Cubist style in this work is closer in most respects to that of the Montparnasse Cubists such as Le Fauconnier (a close friend of Conrad Kikkert) and even Gleizes (see D. Robbins, *Albert Gleizes*, New York: Guggenheim, 1964, ill. p. 23). Mondrian's personal contact in Paris with the Dutch Cubists, Lodewijk Schelfhout and Petrus Alma, must also have played some role, as a comparison between the *Landscape with Trees* and works by Schelfhout implies (see Terpstra ills. 144, 148 and 149). Like *Still Life with Ginger Pot I* (no. 63), this painting represents Mondrian's early Cubist phase before he had completely abandoned the habits of style carried over from his pre-Paris period and before he fully adopted the 1910-12 late synthetic Cubism of Braque and Picasso.

1911-12

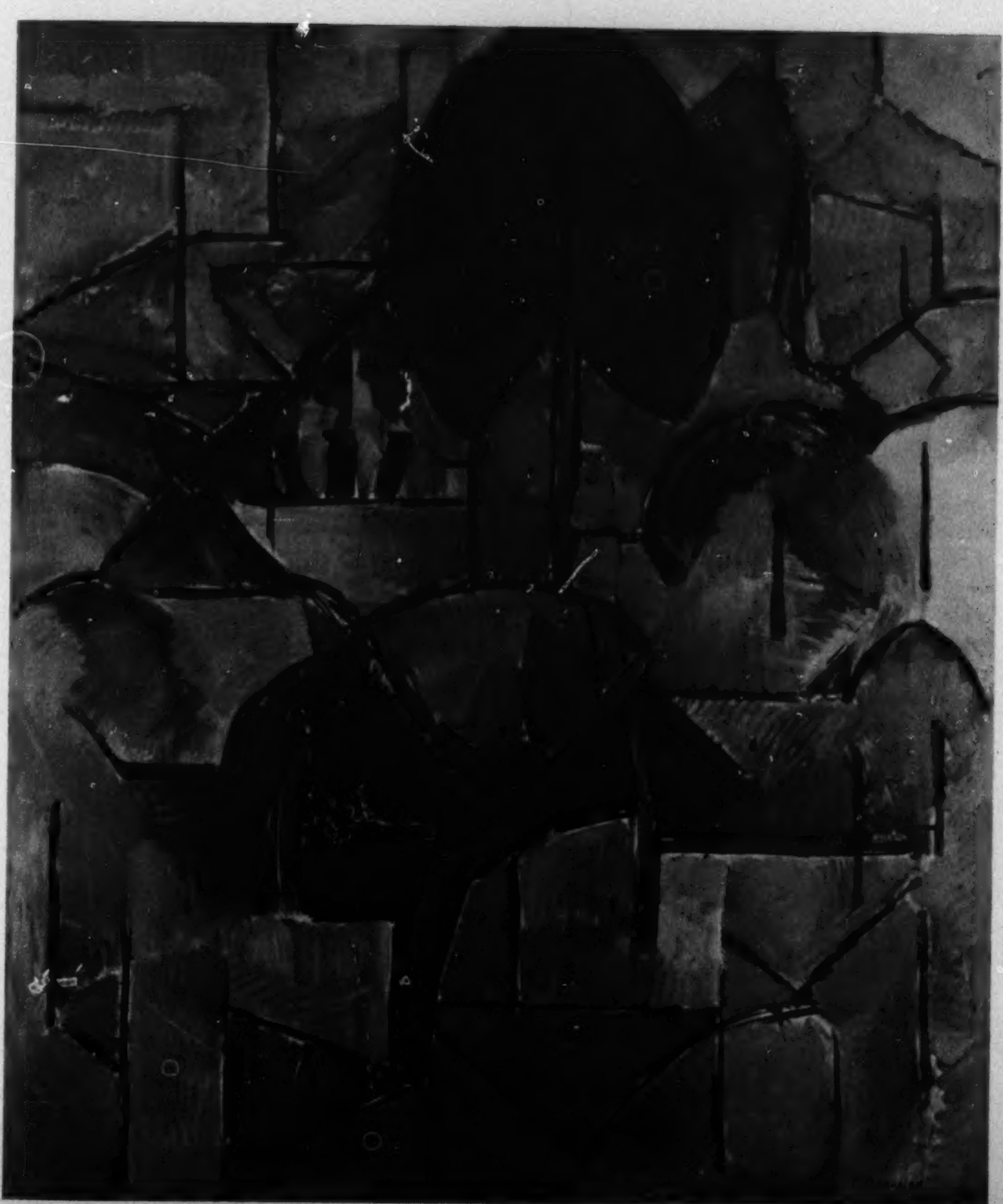
Oil on canvas

47-1/4 x 39-3/8 in., 120 x 100 cm.

Signed lower right: P. Mondrian.

Provenance and exhibitions:
See GM: 115

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague



65 Nude: Dunes and Sea

This major charcoal study has been known as *Reclining Nude* and dated 1910. Mondrian himself gave it that title in referring to it to his friend Mr Holtzman when both were living in New York. A close comparison with the series of notebook pages *Dunes and Sea* (nos. 62a and b) discloses that the original subject was that landscape view rather than an actual figure, although the charcoal outlines are suggestive of the female form as well. The date is at least one and probably two years too early and involves Mondrian's error, late in his life, of believing he had gone to Paris in 1910 rather than early in 1912. In this case, there can be no doubt that the signature and date in India ink were added after 1940, since the signature at the lower left is not on the drawing but on the straw board on which Mondrian mounted the work in New York. When one compares the large drawing with the sketch-book pages, one can see that it represents a synthesis of many views from divergent angles. There are multiple systems of perspective and setting; a view from a dune crescent is implied by the areas in the right foreground, and a view from the beach with the dunes ranging upward from the viewer's level is shown in the sweeping diagonal lines from lower left to upper right. Despite a strong tendency towards abstraction, this drawing contains a view into an ambivalent spatial depth seen through a grid of horizontal contours punctuated by staccato rhythms of vertical linear accents and loosely executed hatching. This can be considered a Cubist work even though the interlocking planes in the foreground are reminiscent of the transitional period of 1911 (e.g. GM: 113 and even 59). Possibly it was executed from the sketches or during Mondrian's brief trip to Domburg in the summer of 1912. Its rhythmically spaced contours differ little from those of *Trees* (no. 67) or *Grey Tree* (no. 66), both of which conform to the style represented at the *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition of late 1912, where an *esquisse* titled *Sur les dunes* (cat. 161) was also shown.

1912

Charcoal on buff paper

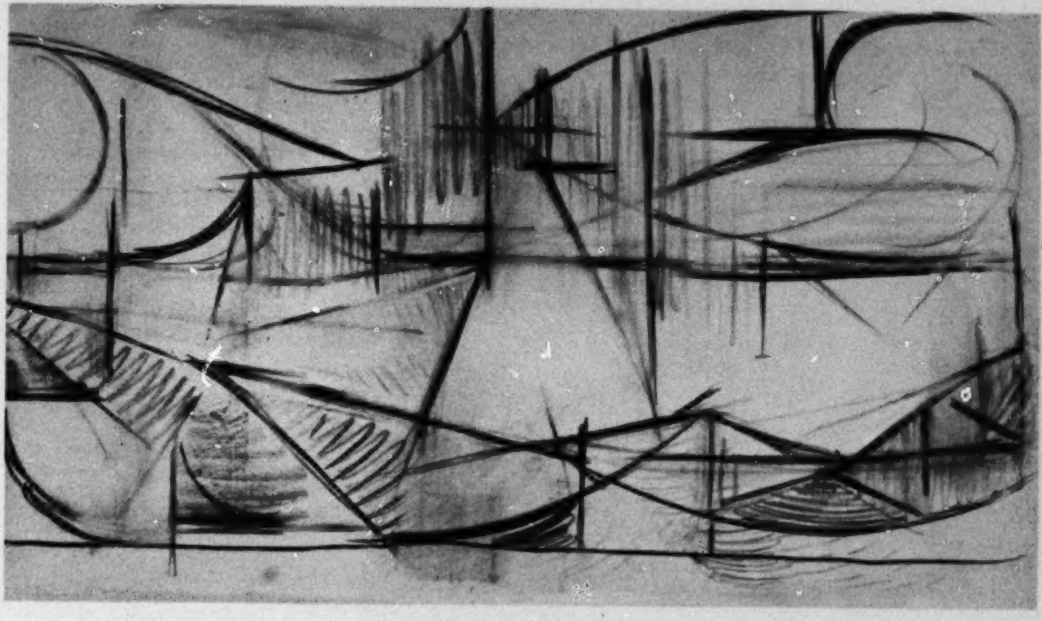
37 x 63 in., 94 x 160 cm.

Signed lower left: P M
Dated lower right: '10

Provenance: Harry Holtzman 1944;
to present owner

Exhibitions: New York 1963, no. 39;
Santa Barbara 1965, no. 36

Sidney Janis Gallery



66 Grey Tree

Like *Still Life with Ginger Pot I* (no. 63), this work represents a more painterly and more descriptive version of a relatively abstract painting (GM: 122). It is derived from a large preparatory charcoal drawing (GM: 120) and is closely related to another oil version (S: c.c. 176). Both preserve the linear grid system of Mondrian's early Cubist experiments (nos. 63 to 65). Yet the decidedly painterly quality of *Grey Tree*, which makes it unique in Mondrian's Cubist production and, in fact, in all Cubism, can be related to the strokes of the charcoal in the ground and sky areas of the drawing, again illustrating the interdependence between the two mediums throughout Mondrian's career.

Blok (see GM: 121) points out that the *Grey Tree* relates directly not only to contemporary works, but also to the earlier *Blue Tree* series, and to other somewhat later and more orthodox Cubist works (GM: 130; S: c.c. 193, to which this writer would also add S: c.c. 191 and perhaps c.c. 190). Although the point of departure for the *Blue Tree* series was probably an actual apple tree, when Mondrian executed *Grey Tree* he was almost certainly working from previous studies or improvising upon a theme which had become extremely familiar to him. Consequently, the fact that the major rhythmical movement of the tree trunk is upward and turns to the left rather than to the right as in the *Blue Tree* series does not permit us to separate the two series historically or analytically.

Grey Tree represents, from an iconographic point of view, a retention of the horizontal female symbolism of the *Blue Tree* series as opposed to the vertical male symbolism of the upright tree image (e.g. nos. 67 and 69). Finally, even this distinction is beginning to break down. It is noteworthy that *Grey Tree* begins a process of rhythmical abstraction, more fully realized in the later version (GM: 122), in which a compositional balance between vertical and horizontal elements is achieved in a lozenge-like structure whose sides are curved in towards the centre almost as if the oval frame of Mondrian's later Cubist works (e.g. no. 70) had been broken into four inverted segments.

1912

Oil on canvas

30-15/16 x 42-3/8 in., 78.5 x 107.5 cm.

Signed lower left: P. MONDRIAN.

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 121

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
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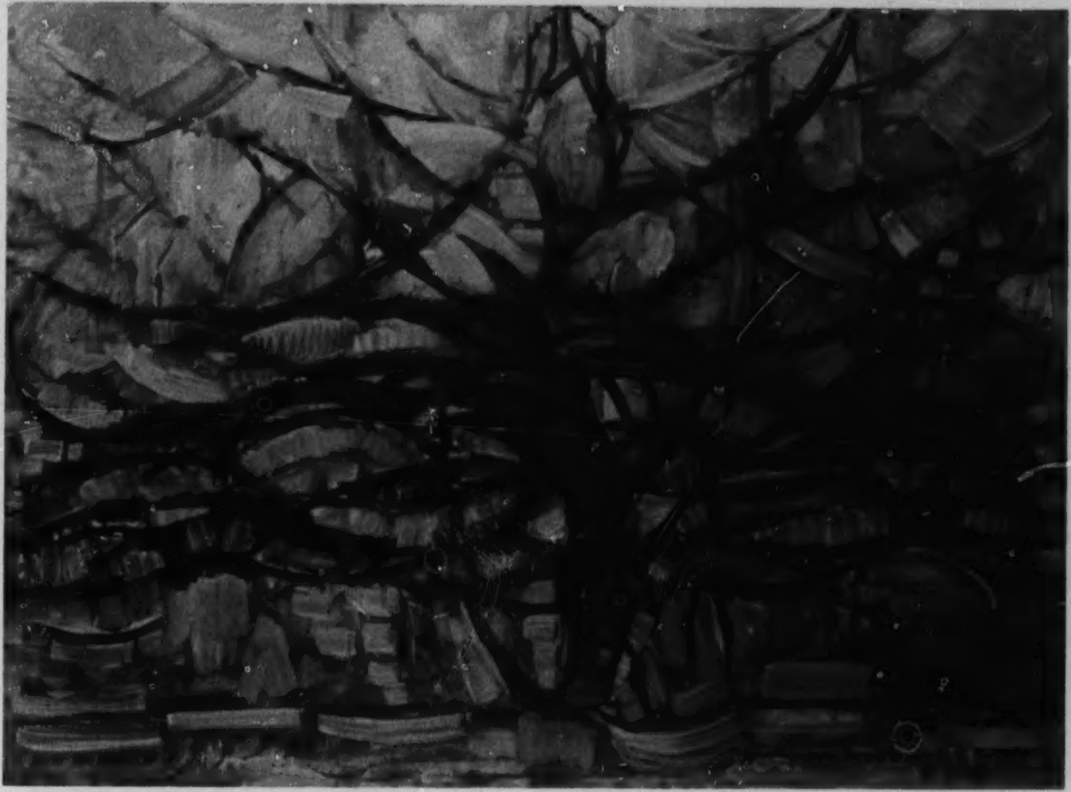


67 Trees

Trees, Nude: Dunes and Sea (no. 65), *Still Life with Ginger Pot II* (GM: 119), *Blossoming Apple Tree* (GM: 122) and *Flowering Trees* (S: ill. p. 114, c.c. 178) represent Mondrian's dominant style during the summer and early autumn of 1912, or that exhibited at the *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition in Amsterdam in the autumn of that year. *Flowering Trees* was illustrated in the catalogue and *Still Life with Ginger Pot II* was almost certainly present (see no. 63). In all these works the mixture of grey, blue and purple derives from his late pre-Paris and initial Cubist experiments (e.g. nos. 63 and 65 and GM: 113). Only an occasional use of ochre anticipates the Picasso-oriented Cubist style of 1913. As in *Grey Tree* (no. 66), the subject can be seen as a synthetic image formed after considerable experimentation by fusing various fragments of earlier versions of upright trees. *Trees* relates closely in composition and expressive intent to the drawing *Woods* (GM: 123), and a comparison between them suggests that Mondrian wished to represent in the oil not a single tree but a tree seen within a grove.

Iconographically, arch-like configurations throughout the composition imply a symbolic identification between tree growths and Gothic architecture more overtly stated in several earlier works (e.g. nos. 14 and 49). One critic of the 1912 *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition ("Giovanni", pseudonym for J. Kalff, in the *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 18 October 1912), although unable to find the trees referred to in the titles of the works displayed, did sense correctly their Gothic imagery and wrote that these works "very strongly suggest leaded window glass". Another critic (G. H. Marius, *Nieuws van den Dag*, 15 October 1912) expressed bafflement as to "what P. Mondrian intended with his broken circles and ellipses". And finally, much later, Mondrian himself spoke to an American admirer about his 1911 (*sic*) tree paintings. In them the vertical emphasis predominated and "a Gothic expression was the result" (Sweeney, p. 15; see also New York 1957). Thus, *Trees* represents a quite definable stage of development in Mondrian's Cubist style. Close iconographic and stylistic parallels with the *Saint Séverin*, *Eiffel Tower* and *Window* series of Robert Delaunay show that Mondrian has arrived at a Cubism as thoroughly abstract as that of this most "Gothic" French Cubist.

1912

Oil on canvas

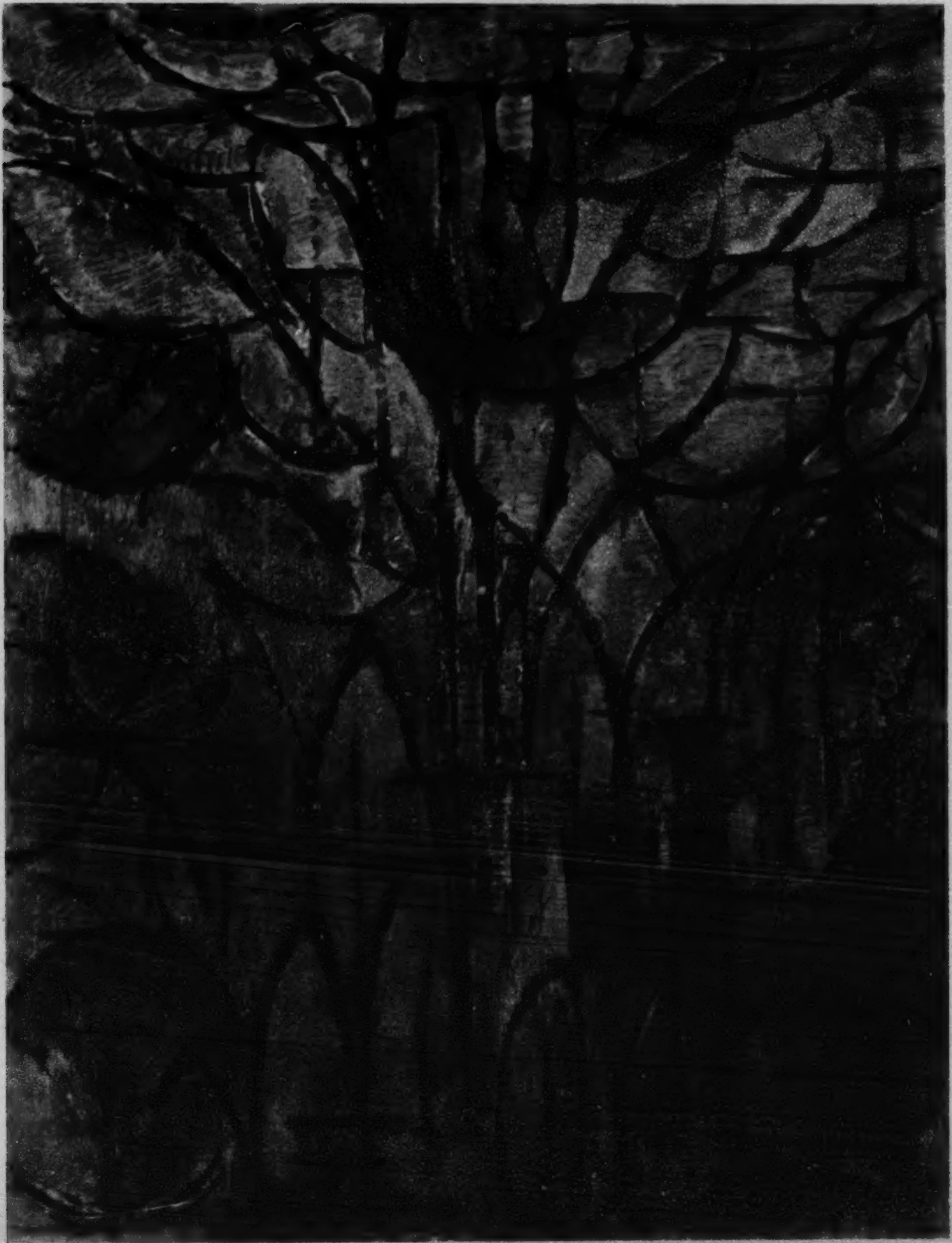
37 x 27-1/2 in., 94 x 69.8 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance:
Nierendorf Gallery; Charmion von Wiegand; G. David Thompson after 1956; Gallery Beyeler; to present owner 1961

Exhibitions:
New York 1945, no. 14; New York 1949; Basel 1964-65, no. 30; Santa Barbara 1965, no. 39

Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh



68 Sunflowers

This and a companion drawing (Seuphor, *Mondrian Paintings*, New York: Tudor, ill. in introduction) exemplify Mondrian's style of *circa* late 1912 to early 1913. Like two other closely related drawings (S: c.c. 190 and 201), it preserves much of the complex spatial interplay of straight and curved contours of the large charcoal *Nude* (no. 65) and *Still Life with Ginger Pot II* (GM: 119) but begins to break down the loosely organized large grid system of those works into a more minutely faceted interplay of triangulated planes and to introduce the staccato rhythms of contemporary orthodox Paris Cubism. The direct influence of the 1910-12 works of Braque and Picasso is seen equally in a major Cubist oil painting which has been titled *Composition in Grey-Blue* (S: ill. p. 99, c.c. 197), but which is based on the same group of sunflowers as this drawing.

1912-13

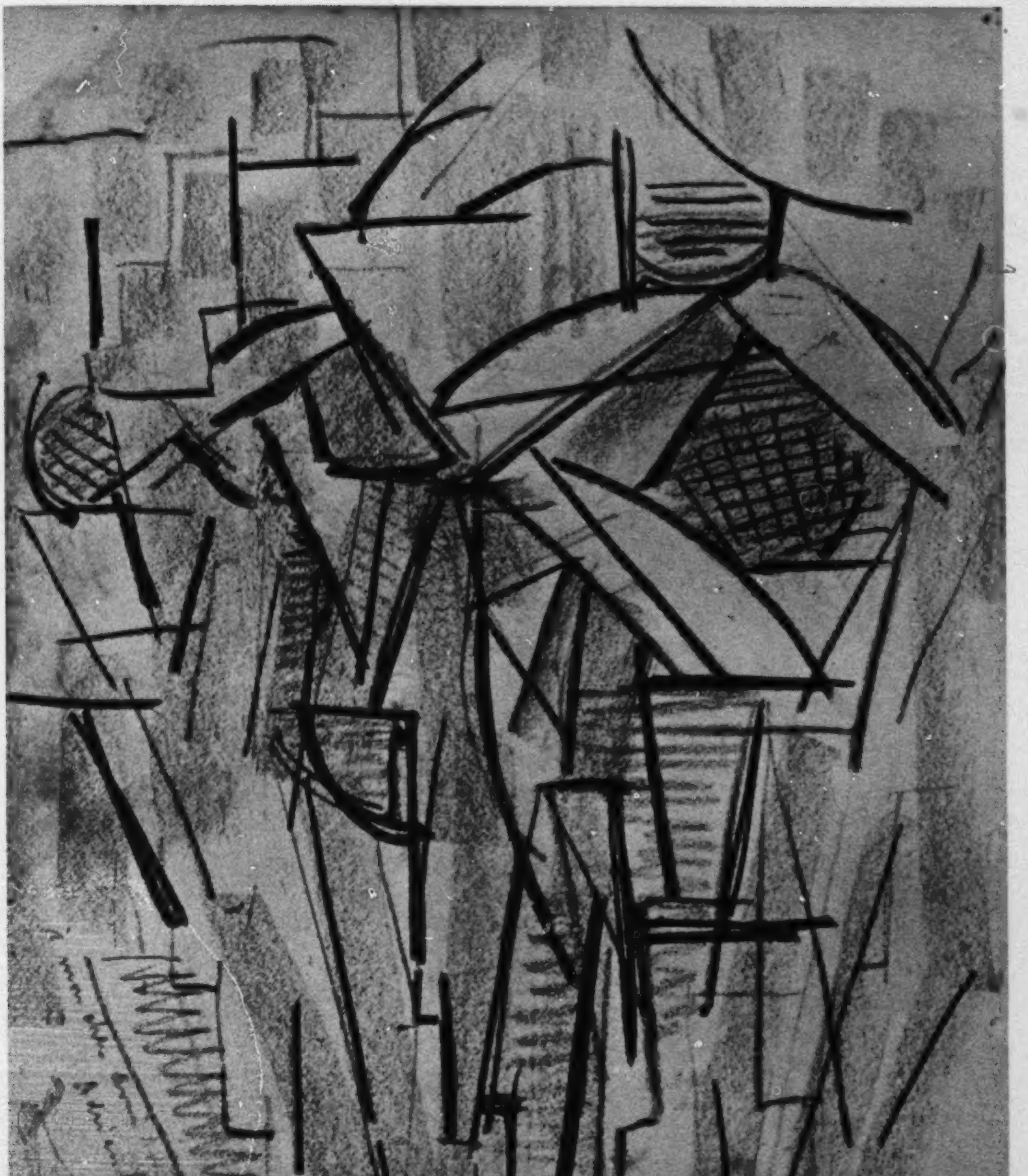
Charcoal drawing on paper

9-5/8 x 12 in., 24.4 x 30.5 cm.

Signed below: P. MONDRIAAN.
Inscribed at the left
"à mon cher ami Adrian Lubbers"

Provenance:
given by the artist to the
painter Adrian Lubbers *circa* 1923;
to present owner from son
of Mr Lubbers 1960

Mr J. P. Smid


P. MONDRIAAN

69 Study: Trees II

This drawing derives from *Study: Trees I (GM: 124)* and supplies the essential format for the major Cubist painting, *Composition No. 7* (S: ill. p. 254, c.c. 265). In both drawing and painting, the fracturing of the larger compositional sub-divisions of Mondrian's earlier Cubist work into tiny facets is in keeping with the more direct influence of the 1910-12 period of Braque and Picasso on Mondrian's work in 1913, an influence documented by illustrations of *Composition No. 7* and *Tableau I* (S: ill. p. 256, c.c. 266) in the *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition catalogue from the autumn of 1913. Despite his increased debt to these painters, Mondrian continued to set his planes parallel to the picture surface. Picasso and Braque, in comparable works, used angled and overlapping planes, which imply a complex perspective system foreign to the more theoretical and consistent Dutchman. *Study: Trees II* emphasizes the flatness of each tree image and yet preserves a certain degree of *repoussoir* relationship between the individual trees.

This work and *Study: Trees I* were signed with a double "a", but even if this was done at the time of execution, the spelling cannot be taken to indicate a date before 1912. On the basis of style, it is impossible that *Study: Trees II* predates the trip to Paris, and therefore the spelling must be considered an anachronism, perhaps because the works were exhibited or sent to someone in the Netherlands. Despite a clear difference in the degree of Cubism, the two drawings may be close in date. A. P. van den Briel recalls that Mondrian still used a naturalistic drawing as a point of departure for his Cubist canvases, as he did also for works of a slightly later date (see nos. 72 to 79).

1913

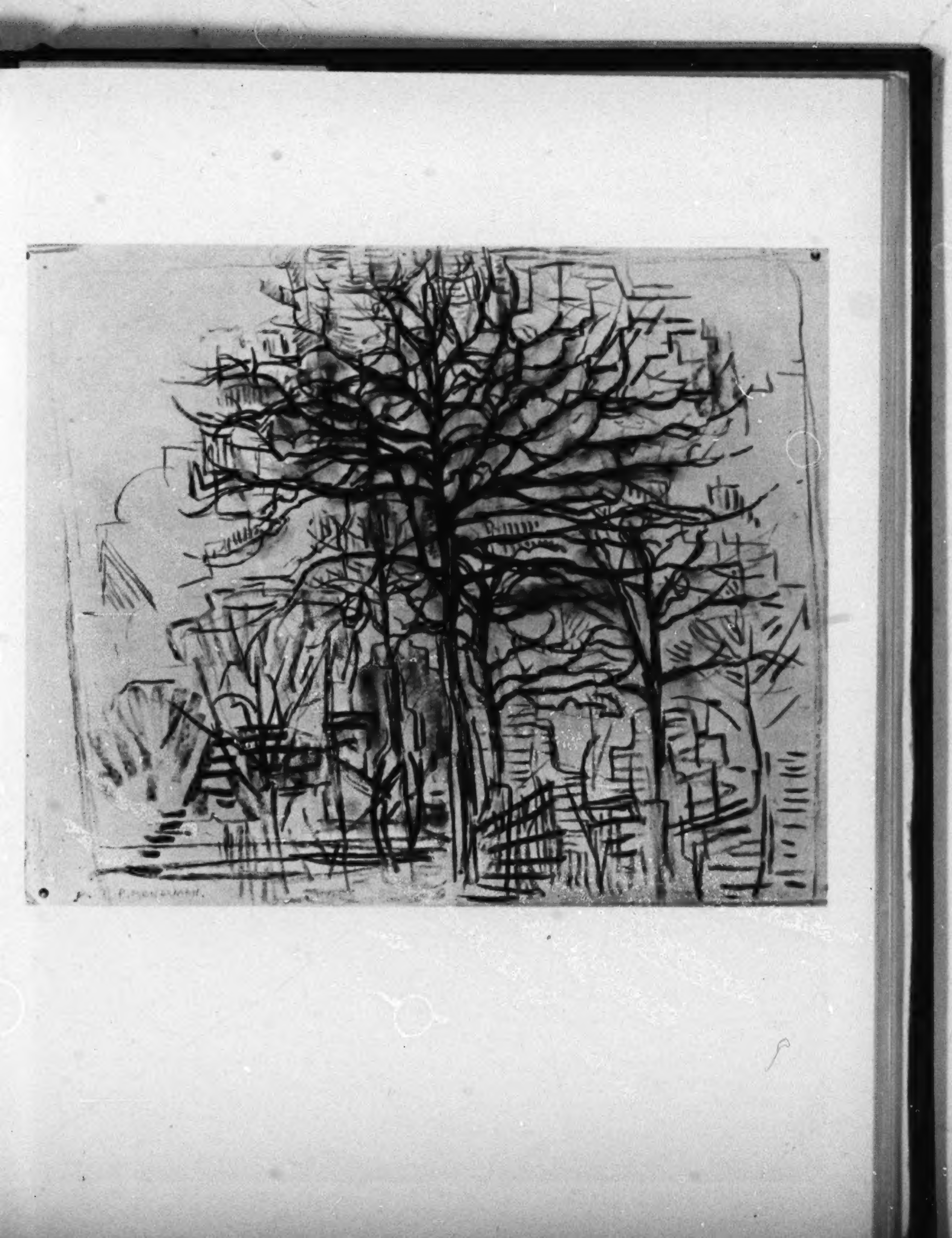
Charcoal on paper

25-13/16 x 34-1/2 in., 65.5 x 87.5 cm.

Signed lower left: P. MONDRIAAN.

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 131

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague



70 Oval Composition with Trees

The influence on *Oval Composition with Trees* of the 1910-12 late analytic Cubist period of Braque and Picasso is undeniable, and yet is so well assimilated that Mondrian does not suffer by such a comparison. It is also the earliest datable instance where Mondrian used an oval frame, since it was illustrated in reviews of the *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition in the fall of 1913 (see Terpstra p. 158, n. 1). The preparatory charcoal drawing (GM: 132) shows even more clearly than the painting to what extent Mondrian has fused several tree forms into one synthetic image. The close stylistic affinity of this work with *Composition No. 7* (S: c.c. 265) and *Composition No. 3* (GM: 130) permits us to consider it typical of his production during the spring and summer of 1913. The ochre-grey colours, broken brush strokes and syncopated structural rhythms show Mondrian at this period as an even closer adherent than Léger and Gris to the style of Braque and Picasso. Yet the *trompe-l'oeil* visual puns on texture dear to the Paris Cubists are present only in the hints of tree bark in the Mondrian painting. It is reliably reported (Terpstra p. 160, n. 3) that Mondrian once took pleasure in identifying the subject motif of the work for the original owner, the distinguished connoisseur, Dr H. P. Bremmer, as a tree in the garden of the Luxembourg Palace in Paris. A drawing on a small sketch-book page (S: ill. p. 111) seems to show the composition in preliminary form. We can grasp how involved and painstaking was Mondrian's procedure only when we compare this diminutive *prima idea* with the final painting and examine other drawings (e.g. S: c.c. 186-89) which seem to represent intermediate steps in the transformation of this or some related tree image into Cubist abstraction.

However, by 1913 Mondrian may no longer have thought of himself as working directly from a motif found in nature. In a review of a Mondrian exhibition of 1915 (*De Kunst,* VII, 1915, pp. 250-53), N. H. Wolf refers to conversations he had with the artist at the time of the 1913 *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition: "Mondrian divides his composition into line and plane, which he places in a conscious, sometimes symmetrical relation to each other. The subject which he paints does not interest him as such, but . . . clearly awakens his interest because of line and colour relationships." With works such as this, Mondrian had already begun to paint according to the principles and methods of his later works, although they are here realized in terms of a derivative style and natural subject matter. For a sensitive appreciation of the structural and expressive qualities of this work, see Wilmon-Vervaerdt, *De Kunst,* VI, 1913, p. 86.

1913

Oil on canvas

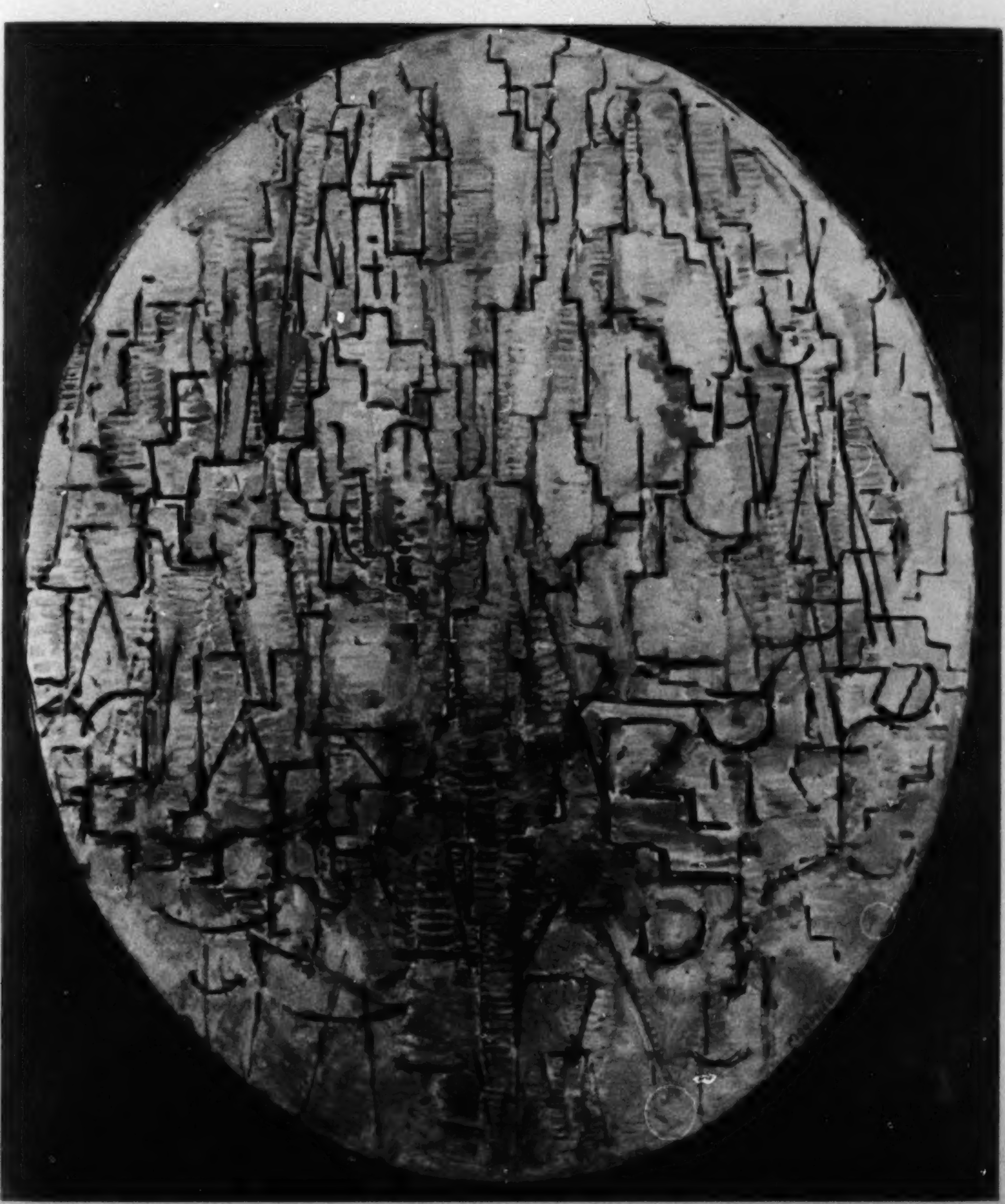
37-1/16 x 30-3/4 in., 94 x 78 cm.

Signed lower right (inside oval):
MONDRIAN. (also traces of another
signature lower left.)

Provenance:
Dr H. P. Bremmer 1913 (?); to
present owner from F. Bremmer 1956

Exhibitions:
Amsterdam 1913, no. 3(?);
Rotterdam 1915;
The Hague 1955, no. 82;
Zurich 1955, no. 62;
London 1955, no. 29;
Basel 1964-65, no. 31

Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam



71 Composition XIV

This work is so close in style and composition to *Tableau I*, present at the fall 1913 *Moderne Kunstkring* exhibition (see no. 69), that a date in the summer or fall of 1913 seems probable. Like *Tableau I* and *Composition in Brown and Grey* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, (S: ill. p. 257 and c.c. 268) the subject might be based on plant or tree growth, which, if there, is less directly felt than even in the Guggenheim Museum's *Composition No. 7* (see no. 69) or the Stedelijk Museum's *Oval Composition with Trees* (no. 70). It is illuminating that another drawing closely related in style, now known as *Church Façade* (S: ill. p. 106, c.c. 258), was described by Mondrian to its owners, Fritz and Lucy Glarner, as having definitely derived from a series of upright trees. The implication is that Mondrian himself considered such matters of real importance. Furthermore, a comparison between *Composition XIV* and a drawing of the *Domburg Church Façade* (S: ill. p. 107 and c.c. 252) discloses affinities of style, composition and perhaps even subject origin. If one can no longer feel certain whether the rhythms are derived from organic form or the architecture of a Gothic church façade, this may result from the long history of that association in Mondrian's naturalistic works (see nos. 14 and 67).

Finally, while the grey-ochre colour of this work recalls the influence of Braque and Picasso, the more rigid polarization of its linear structure into a vertical and horizontal grid (even the counterpoint provided by segments of circles buttresses rather than compromises this aspect) represents the most advanced tendency of Mondrian's production late in 1913 and anticipates the more boldly scaled grid divisions of *Composition No. 6* of early 1914 (no. 75).

1913

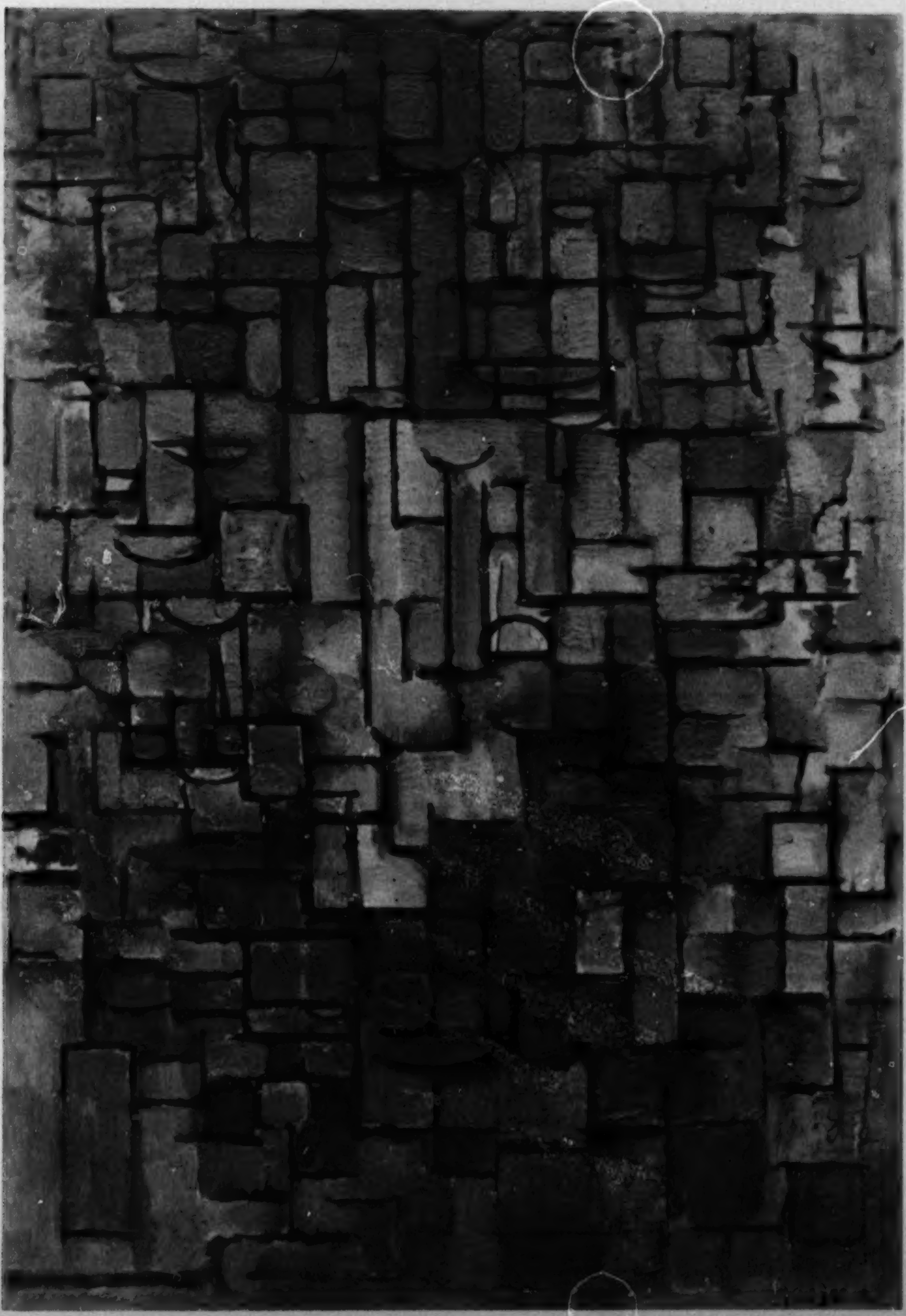
Oil on canvas

37 x 25-5/8 in., 94 x 65 cm.

Signed lower right: MONDRIAN.

Provenance:
acquired by the Rev. H. van Assendelft
of Gouda from Mondrian, probably
during the First World War;
to Mrs van Assendelft-Haas;
to present owner in 1955

Stedelijk van Abbemuseum,
Eindhoven



72 Paris Buildings

1912-13

Crayon on paper

9-5/16 x 6-1/8 in., 23.6 x 15.5 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: with Mondrian estate to Harry Holtzman; to present owner 1958

Sidney Janis Gallery

This drawing was executed on a relatively large sketch-book page (compare no. 76) and provides a special insight into the thinking behind Mondrian's treatment of a Paris façade. It represents a lateral façade of an extant building at the corner of the rue du Départ and the avenue Edgar-Quinet, which can be viewed only when one walks a short distance along the rue du Départ towards the boul. du Montparnasse, or across the street, along the taxi ramp leading to the Gare Montparnasse (fig. 21). Such subjects, sometimes called rather equivocally *Demolished Buildings,* are common in Paris and were sketched by Mondrian on numerous occasions. In this example, it is significant that the street façades of the large building in the background are decorated in a highly fanciful, neo-mannerist nineteenth-century style, including classical nudes and elaborate decorative borders. In choosing to represent the side or rear view, he was thus consciously turning his back upon the art of the past in favour of a contemporary, if less elegant, subject.

Mondrian clearly chose this particular site, however, because he noticed an advertising poster for a French brand of *bouillon,* KUB, a word spelled out in the drawing, in which an image of the little cube can be seen at the left. The KUB *bouillon* and the Cusenier liqueur advertisement might also have been seen as images corresponding symbolically to Mondrian's artistic intentions, since the cube figuratively dissolves a three dimensional solid into a two dimensional wall surface, and the alcohol could be thought to imply some kind of spiritual release as well. In addition, *bouillon* is also a French term for a very inexpensive restaurant of the type that Mondrian himself frequented by necessity, so that a secondary iconographic analogy between the humble subject matter and modest mode of his own existence is not inconceivable.

Picasso also included this seemingly ubiquitous poster in *Paysage aux Affiches* (Zervos Vol. II, ill. 353, p. 168) done at Sorgues in the summer of 1912. A comparison between the two works, however, only shows how divergent in aim was the witty punning allusion to both two and three dimensional systems of perspective in the Picasso from the serious, programmatic intention of this single imitation of *collé* lettering yet discovered in the work of Mondrian. Finally, Matisse too is said to have noticed this poster during the summer of 1913, while vacationing in the south of France, and to have been annoyed to find that even there he could not escape the presence of Cubism (Pierre Cabanne, *L'Epopée du Cubisme,* pp. 147-48).

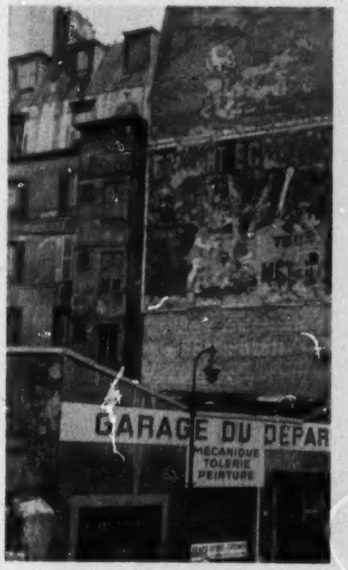
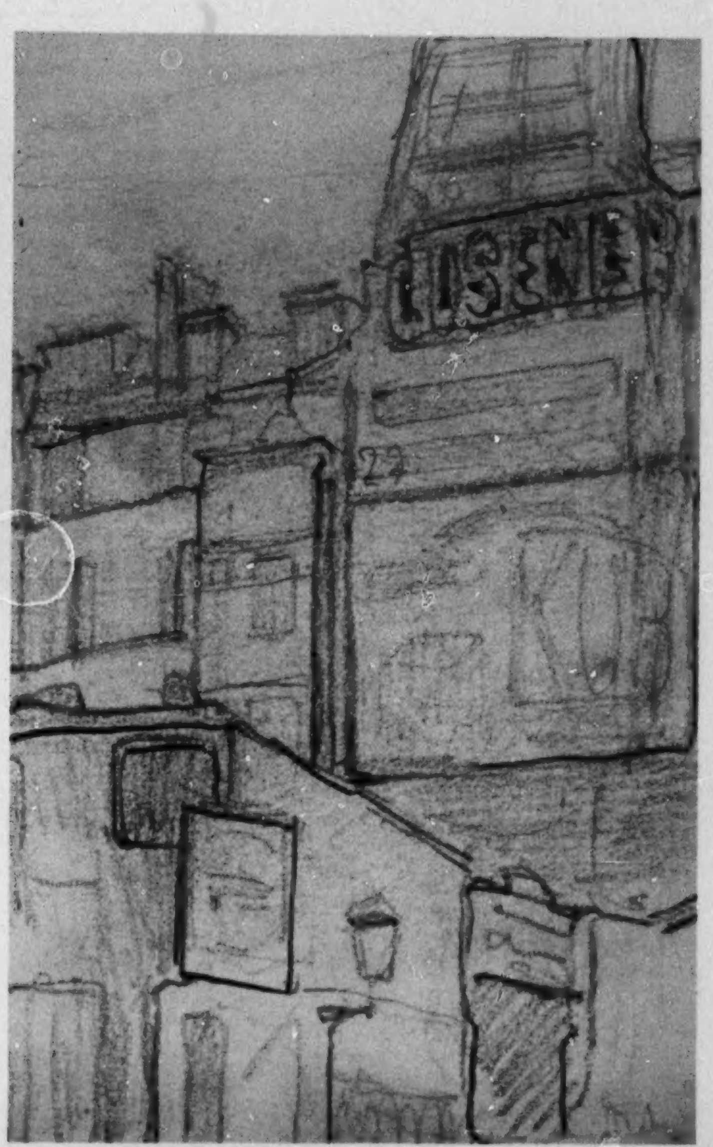

GARAGE DU DEPAR
MECANIQUE
TOLERIE
PEINTURE

figure 21



73 Oval Composition

This work and the related equally large charcoal drawing (S: c.c. 280, ill. Basel 1964-65, no. 32) derive from the same subject (fig. 21), which is shown more literally in a small drawing (no. 72). The letters "KUB" and the outlines of an enclosed stairwell to the left of the major façade are among the few salient features of the original setting preserved diagramatically in this final oil version. The charcoal drawing, although it is a final composition study for the painting (the " '12" date on the drawing was added in New York and should read " '14" according to the principle explained in nos. 62 and 65), does seem to imply a view through a grill-work of lattice-like lines that is found in the somewhat earlier *Nude: Dunes and Sea* (no. 65), but largely suppressed in the painting.

If the colours of the advertising poster conformed to those of present KUB *bouillon* containers, they were the primary colours red and yellow, and thus related directly to the colour scheme of the painting. The re-introduction of primary colours into the Cubist grey-ochre scheme and the increasing two-dimensionality of the composition point to a date of late 1913 or early 1914 for this work.

1913-14

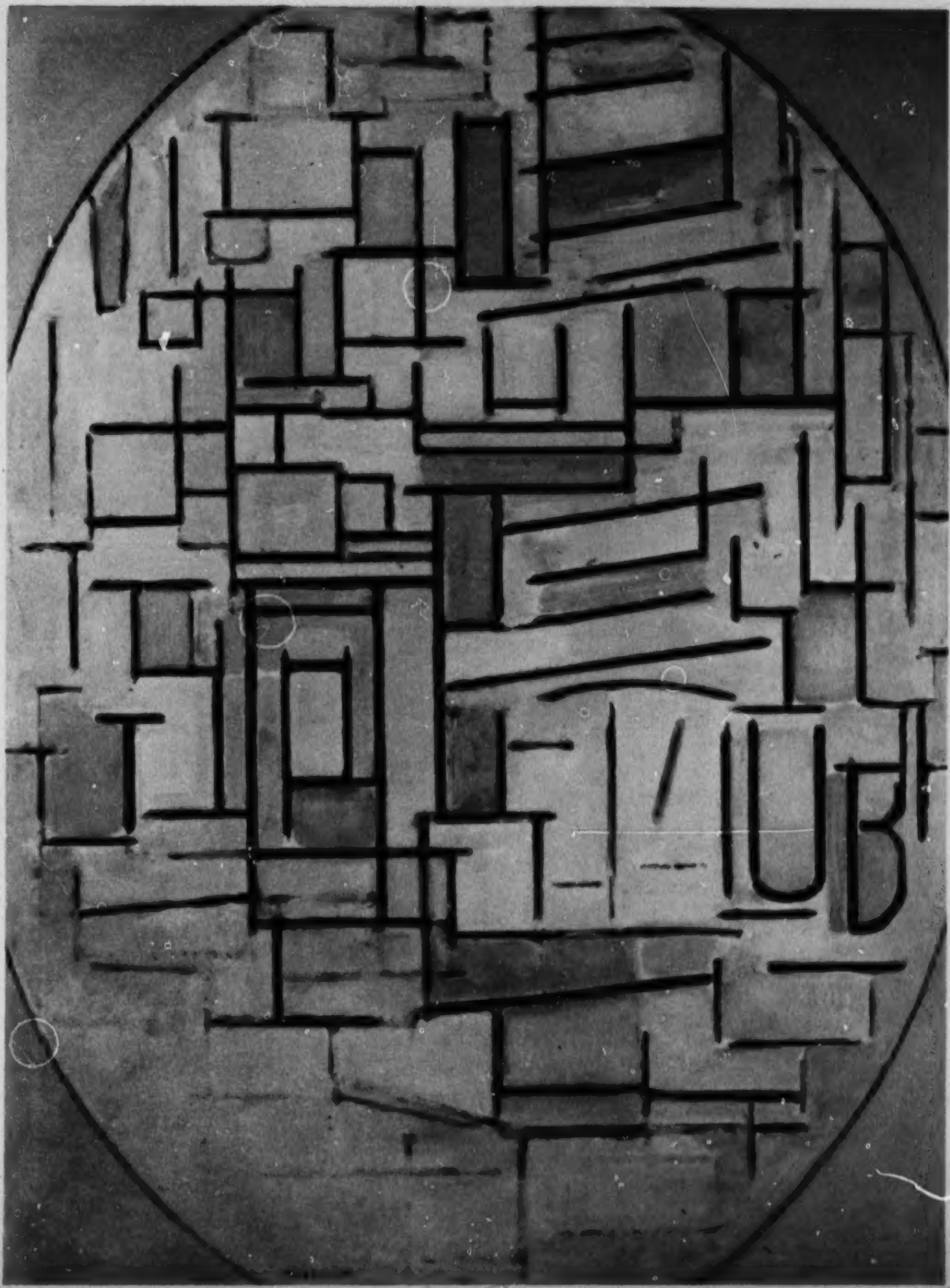
Oil on canvas

44-1/2 x 33-5/16 in., 113 x 84.5 cm.

Signed lower left (inside oval):
MONDRIAN.

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 134

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague


KUB

74 Blue Façade

Although Seuphor has titled this work *Composition No. 9: Scaffolding*, a comparison with the drawings *Demolished Building* (S: c.c. 264) and fig. 22 indicates that the subject is a lateral façade of a Paris building on which can be seen the remains of an adjacent interior. The outlines of the partitions and the wall contours at the bottom and top of this composition blend into a flat pattern of almost abstract design. The two drawings and at least seven others, all from a Paris sketch book of *circa* 1912-14, show the subject from several angles and in varying degrees of completeness. The title *Blue Façade* is justified not only by the monochromatic colour scheme of the oil but also by the inscription "*B*" (which can indicate blue in both French and Dutch) on most of the squares of one drawing.

The dating of this important work is as intriguing as it is problematical since the drawing was inscribed by Mondrian (no doubt much later) " '10", indicating that Mondrian thought it had been executed not long after his arrival in Paris. The painting, however, would seem clearly to relate in style to such works as *Oval Composition* (no. 73) and even more to *Composition with Colour Planes* (S: c.c. 284), dated 1914. Moreover, a date of late 1913 or early 1914 for these works may be deduced from the " '12" which Mondrian added in New York to the large charcoal drawings (S: c.c. 277, 280 and 282) which are clearly final compositional designs for the paintings. By assuming that Mondrian was two years early in his remembered date of arrival in Paris, we can read the " '12" as indicating a date of 1914. (On a checklist owned by Mr Holtzman, which Mondrian apparently used to make up the catalogue of his 1942 exhibition at the Valentine Gallery, the drawings (21) *Tree* and (22) *Building* were first listed as 1912 and then changed to 1914.)

Seen in this light, *Blue Façade* comes at the culmination of Mondrian's first stay in Paris and also points forward strikingly to a number of works as late as 1917 or 1918 (e.g. nos. 82, 83, 85 and S: c.c. 295). Whether or not the blue tonality of this work represents a conscious remembrance of the *Blue Tree* period of *circa* 1908-09 and thus contains a hint of the symbolism of late evening, the finely nuanced colour range reminds us that Mondrian's Cubist period came only after a long experience with tonal *plein-air* paintings.

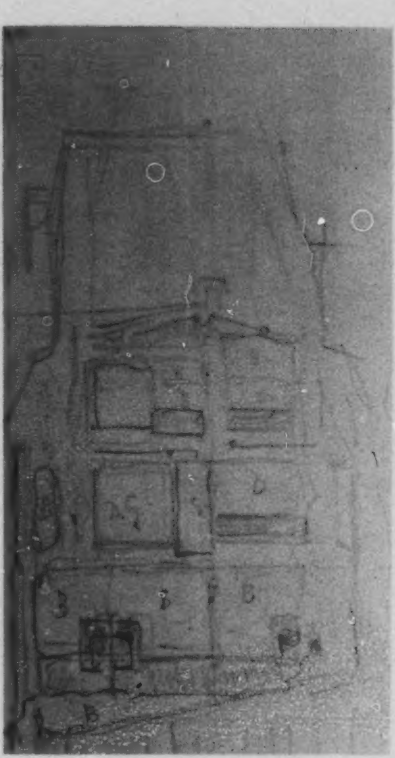


figure 22

1913-14

Oil on canvas

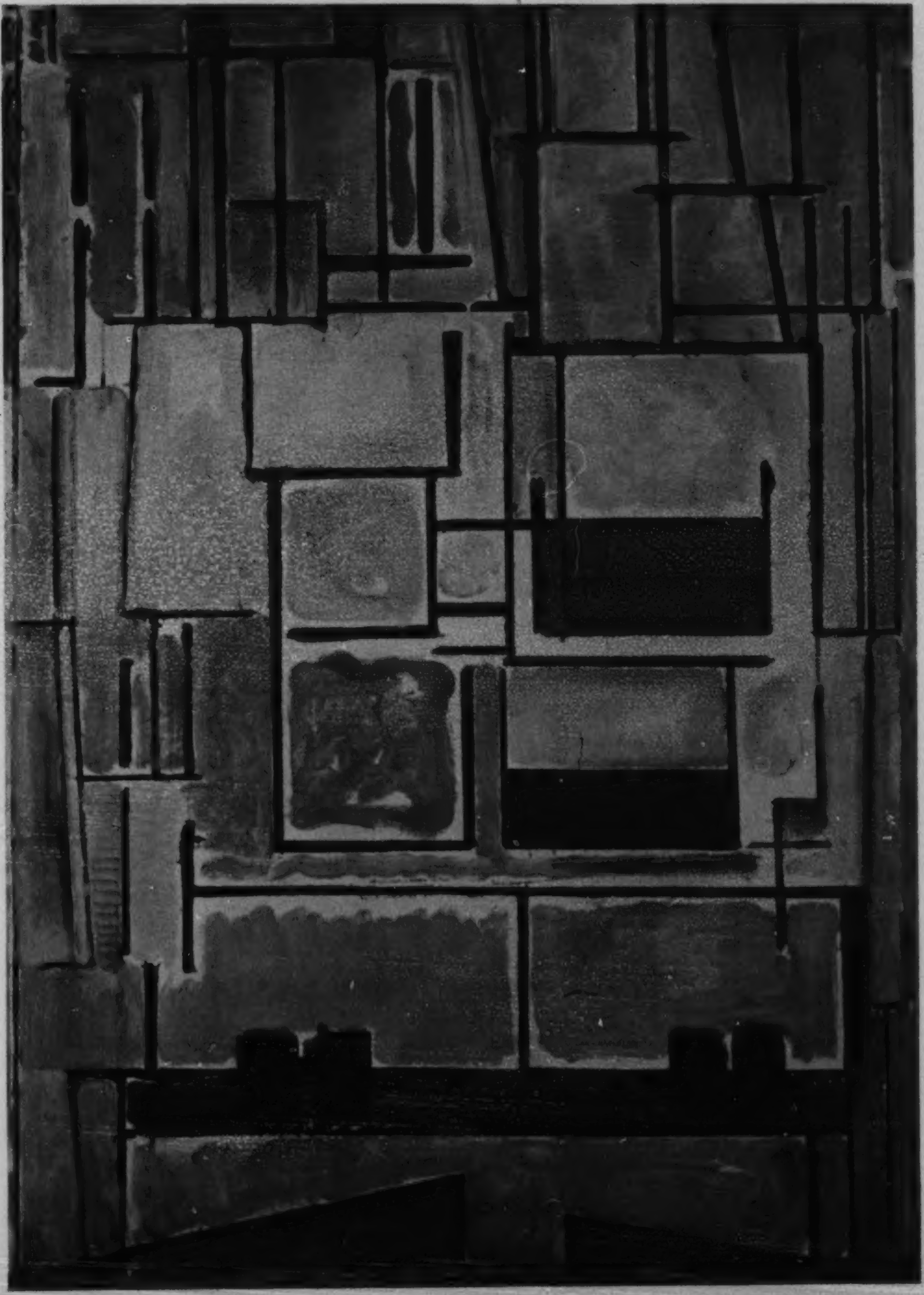
37-1/2 x 26-5/8 in., 95.2 x 67.5 cm.

Signed lower right: MONDRIAN.

Provenance: ex collection John Senior

Exhibitions: New York 1951, no. 12; New York 1957, no. 11

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Mr and Mrs Armand P. Bartos



75 Composition No. 6

This work, which bears the date 1914, represents a slightly greater suppression of natural subject matter than *Oval Composition* (no. 73) and *Blue Façade* (no. 74), its immediate stylistic predecessors. The subject does not lend itself to immediate identification with a specific building site, although the tiered arrangement of the square planes in the upper left indicates an origin in the series of vertical Paris building façades rather than in any other of Mondrian's motifs *circa* 1914, such as the Domburg church façade. Its grey, pink and light ochre colours suggest Mondrian's emergence from the classic brown monochrome used by most Paris Cubists until *circa* 1913.

Each of Mondrian's Cubist canvases tends to have its own laws of colour and design arrived at empirically, as an examination of this work shows, since several squares of light blue have been completely painted over with other colours. The surface has a marked painterly quality which was patiently built up by the same process of trial and error as the black line grid. In this respect Mondrian continued to work in the classical traditions of painting, unless one admits some analogy with the process of musical composition, where a simple theme is stated and elaborated with variations and inversions of a basic melodic or harmonic structure. One could suppose that Mondrian was already thinking in these terms, since he had spent much of the winter 1912-13 with the composer Jacob van Domselaer who, in the very year in which this work was painted, began his own *Stijl Proeven* based partly upon Mondrian's paintings.

1914

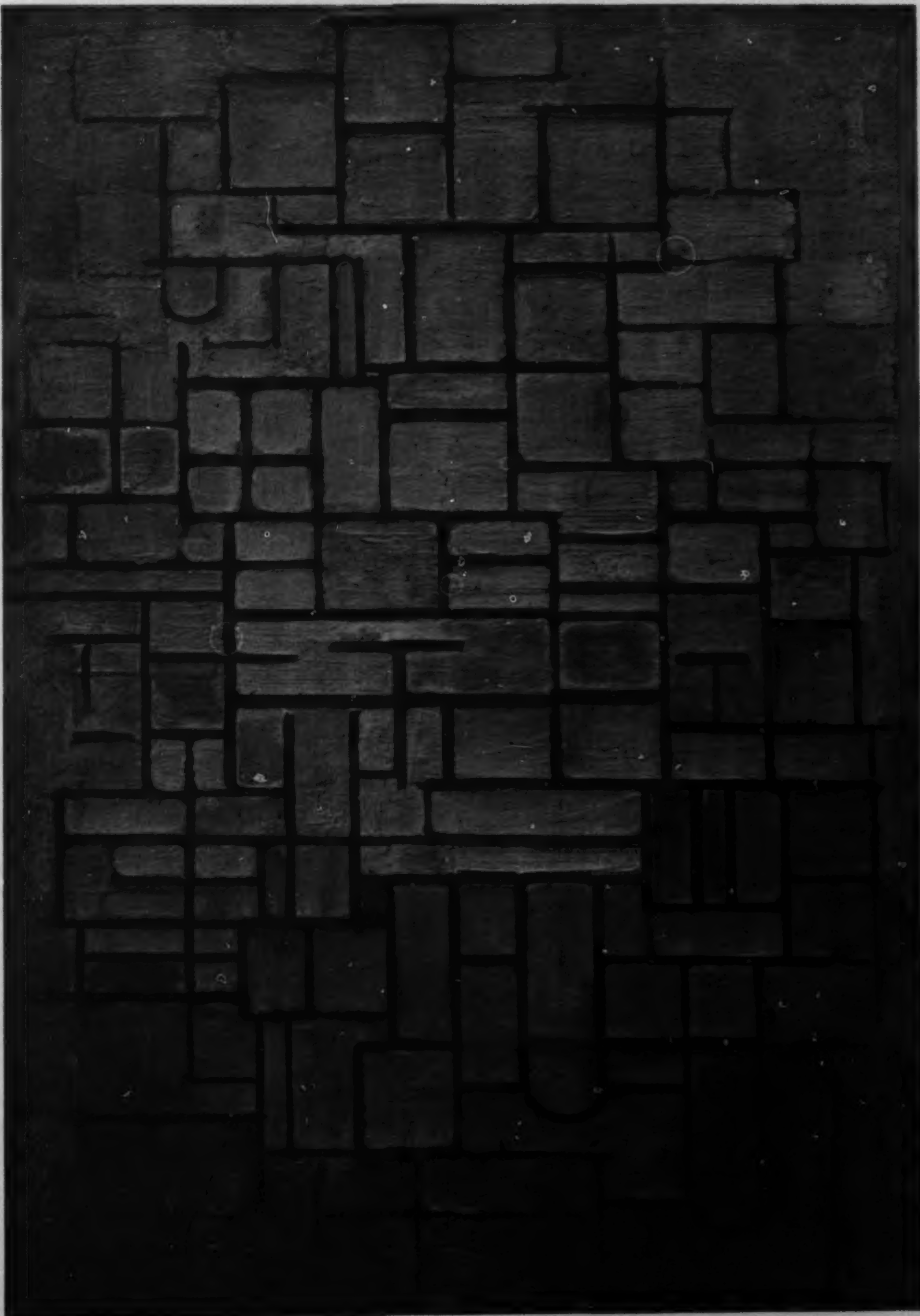
Oil on canvas

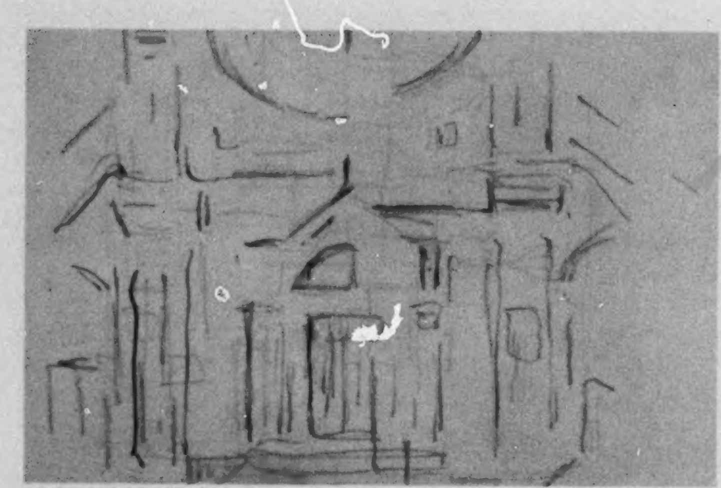
34-11/16 x 24-1/16 in., 88 x 61 cm.

Signed lower left: MONDRIAN. 1914.

Provenance:
acquired by S. B. Slijper *circa*
1919; in recent years on loan
to Stedelijk van Abbemuseum,
Eindhoven
since 3 October 1964
on loan to the Gemeentemuseum,
The Hague

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague





76 Church Façade

1913-14

Crayon and pencil on paper

6-1/8 x 9-5/16 in., 15.5 x 23.6 cm.

Not signed or dated

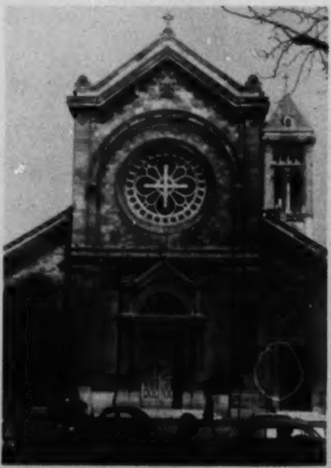
Provenance:
Mondrian estate to Harry Holtzman;
to present owner 1958

Sidney Janis Gallery

The subject can be identified as the façade of Notre Dame des Champs on the boul. du Montparnasse not far from where Mondrian lived at 26, rue du Départ. Several other versions are found in a 1912-14 sketch book, but this example is somewhat larger in format and includes more specifically the details of the door with superimposed pediment and, above that, half of the circular rose window (fig. 23). This drawing permits us to determine the subject of two other works previously considered abstract designs (nos. 77 and 78) and indicates Mondrian's working methods at the time. Even more than the drawing *Paris Buildings* (no. 72), it treats an architectural subject as an essentially flat façade. Behind specific architectural features one can discover a lightly sketched grid of squares and rectangles somewhat asymmetrically counterpointing the otherwise statically symmetrical composition. These at first appear as willful impositions by Mondrian, but a close comparison with the photograph of the church discloses that the relative light or darkness of certain areas of stone could have provided the point of departure for Mondrian's abstract improvisation.

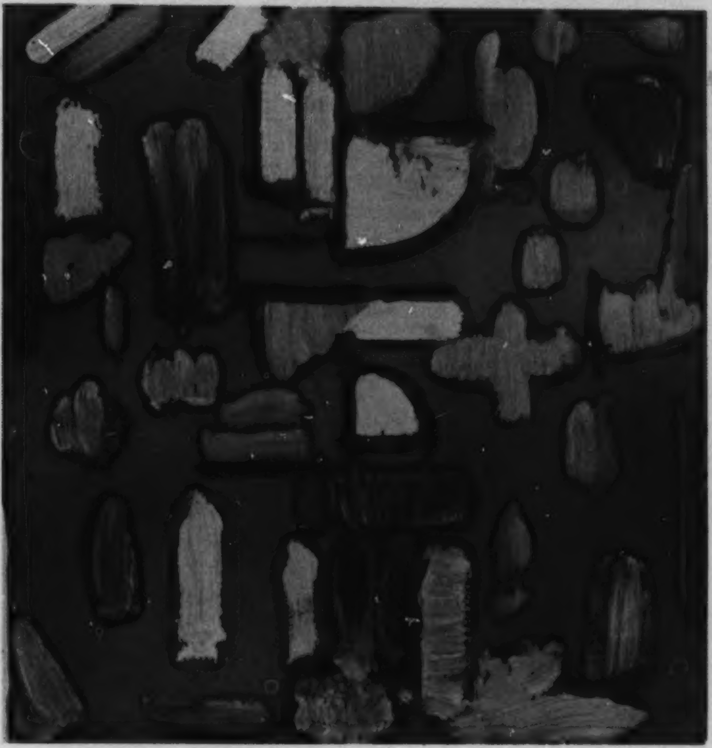
The subject should not be thought to champion traditional religious iconography, since it is a Roman Catholic church, which Mondrian did not attend. The horizontal format of the composition, the classical Mediterranean style of architecture and the feminine symbolism in the name *Notre Dame des Champs* point instead to an identification of it with the female, horizontal, material polarity that Mondrian had come to consider one of two cosmic principles at work in the world (see also nos. 77 and 78).

figure 23



77

Composition with Pink, Blue, Yellow and White



1913-14

Oil on cardboard

11-1/2 x 11 in., 29.2 x 27.9 cm.

Signed lower left: *Piet Mondrian.*

Provenance:
from artist to Mr Gerard Hordijk;
Harry Holtzman;
to present owner 1963

Exhibitions: New York 1964
Marlborough, no. 9;
Santa Barbara 1965, no. 41

Marlborough-Gerson Gallery,
New York

Only the contours of the central doorway with its superimposed semi-circular pediment, horizontal frieze and, above this, a segment of the rose window allow us to relate this unique oil sketch to the subject of the drawing *Church Façade* (no. 76). The drawing may have served as the specific model for the oil sketch, since its squarish architectural features and underlying abstract grid seem somewhat closer than other known versions to the contours of the sketch. The square format of the oil sketch and a general equivalence between horizontals and verticals suggest that Mondrian was here trying to strike a balance between these two cosmic forces. Through oblique references to the Christian church and cross, he also wished to preserve "a place for the godly element in art", as he said in his sketchbook annotations to drawings of the same subject.

This oil sketch is also of interest in terms of Mondrian's stylistic development. Its broad, flat, painterly brush strokes relate to works of Mondrian's late naturalistic period (no. 43) but also will be found in many paintings of the late Cubist and immediately post-Cubist periods (e.g. no. 74). His return here to a direct use of the three primary colours can be interpreted as part of a general reaction *circa* 1912-14 against the neutral colours of classic French Cubism which first took place in the art of Delaunay and Léger and subsequently in that of Braque and Picasso. For Mondrian more than for them it was a return to convictions about colour already formed in 1908-09 (nos. 53-56). From this point on, except for the few works in black and white alone, Mondrian would never abandon the use of the three primaries, although he was to present them in a consistently pure form only *circa* 1922-23. Thus, while the colour conception of this remarkable study may owe a debt to Léger's contemporary experiments in his *Contrasts of Forms* series, the utter flatness of the image and reduction of plastic elements to their barest essentials are Mondrian's own personal statement.

78 Circular Composition: Church Façade

This work was mounted on straw board only after Mondrian arrived in New York (see also no. 63). The signature in India ink at the lower left is not on the original drawing, and the date " '13" at the lower right is not certain, since it very likely contains the same memory error which involves so many works from the period of his first stay in Paris. However, there can be no doubt that this work relates in subject and content to both the drawing (no. 76) and oil sketch (no. 77) based on the façade of Notre Dame des Champs (fig. 23). It shares with the drawing certain basic elements of the underlying irregular grid, and with the sketch the roughly square format and reduction of the façade to an abstract design. The circle in which this design is encased clearly relates to the rose window of the original church, as does the Greek cross appearing just above the centre of the composition. It is nonetheless possible that Mondrian has also used certain elements of the *Domburg Façade* series and even some from the *Pier and Ocean* series of 1914-15 (see especially S: c.c. 237 and 238 for the squarish design elements at the top of the central axis, indicating the probability of a fusion of various subject motifs). These give this abstract image of distilled spiritual content an emphasis on vertical accents, which adds greater force to the masculine or spiritual aspect of reality.

In his abstractions from the neo-classic church of Notre Dame des Champs, Mondrian accepted a greater degree of static balance than had been typical of his art in the past, in which either the vertical or the horizontal axis had been dominant. Finally, it can be noted that the sculptured pediment above the central door represents the Virgin almost as an ancient goddess of fertility with the Christ child as a *putto* in her lap. The little winged *putti* flanking the scene are also derived from ancient and Renaissance traditions and handle their cornucopias with adroit ease. Mondrian would have appreciated this neo-classic pediment sculpture not for its traditional Christian symbolism, but as a chance confirmation of the cosmic dualism of his own philosophic outlook. Here the female is symbolic of the material elements in nature and contrasted to the male as the ascending force leading the world towards spiritual enlightenment.

1914

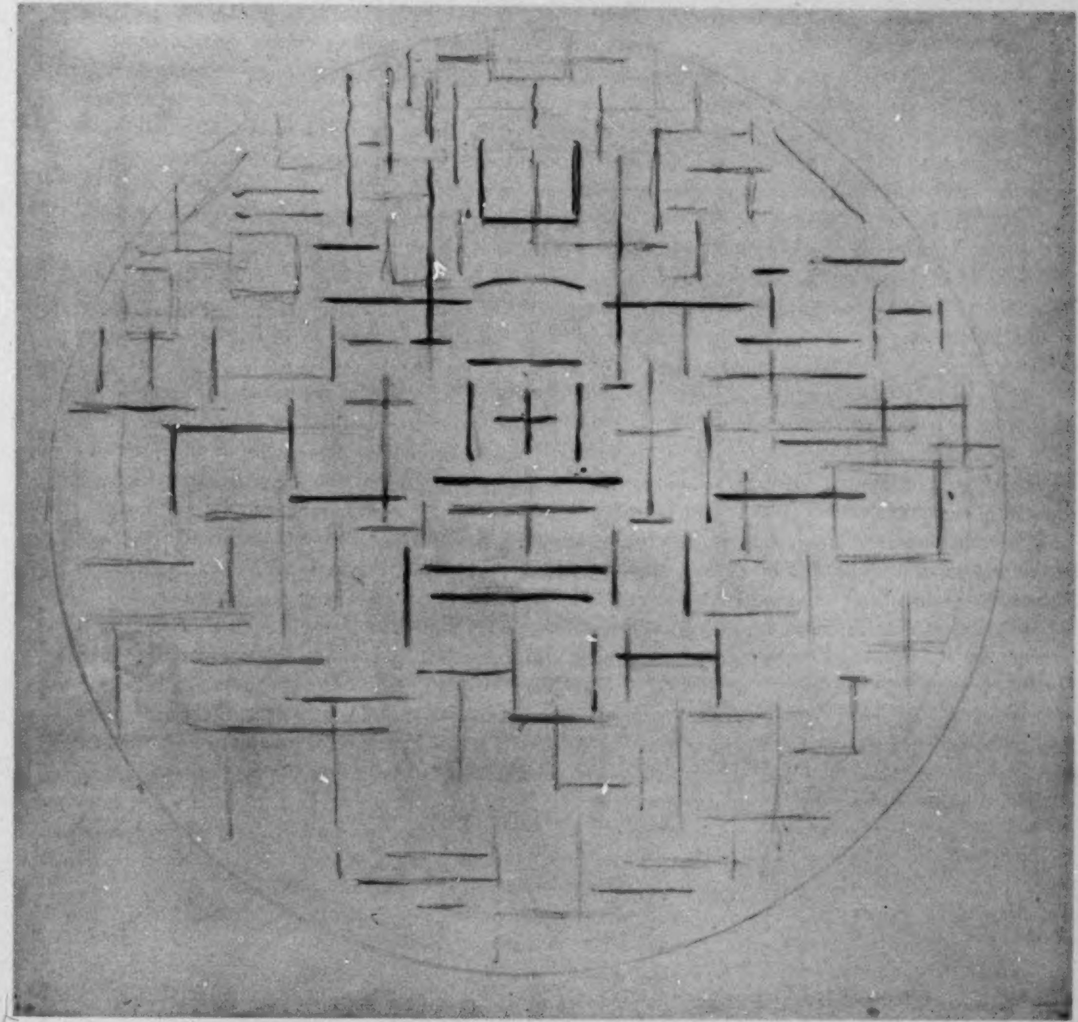
Charcoal drawing on buff paper

43-3/4 x 45 in., 111 x 114.2 cm.

Signed lower left: P•M
Dated lower right: '13

Provenance: Mondrian estate
to Harry Holtzman;
to present owner 1958

Sidney Janis Gallery



At the 1915 *Hollandsche Kunstenaarskring* exhibition, the work now called *Composition No. 10* was the only painting among the ten exhibited to bear the subtitle "in black-white" instead of "in colour". This painting, dated 1915, is the last version of the *Pier and Ocean* series, since several drawings of the same subject, including what appears to be the penultimate charcoal study (S: ill. p. 123, c.c. 238), are dated 1914. The subtitle "*Scheveningen*" which has been given to another closely related charcoal drawing (no. 79b) refers to a now replaced amusement pier at that famous port and resort area near The Hague. This is clearly a misnomer, since the actual subject is a frontal view of the setting represented in a lateral view in the *Dunes and Sea* sketch-book drawings (nos. 62a and b). Although Mondrian began in 1908-09 to paint the sea as seen from the dunes, the drawings including a row of piers and contained within an oval boundary are not likely to have been done before Mondrian's contact in Paris with the oval compositions of Braque and Picasso. Even in the sketch-book drawings which probably show the original conception, one suspects a date of *circa* 1912-13 at the earliest (see no. 70). These sketches were not necessarily made during an actual trip to Domburg, since they could easily have been improvised in Paris from memory or from other sketches. Mondrian is reported to have revisited Domburg in the summer and autumn of 1914, the year in which virtually all of the larger charcoal drawings of this subject in oval are dated (see S: c.c. 234-39).

In the larger drawings, as in those of the Domburg church façade of the same year, Mondrian creates an essentially two-dimensional pictorial space by reducing the perspective implications of the pier form and the distant horizon line to a diagrammatic cruciform image. The charcoal drawings and this painting nevertheless preserve some sense of spatial play between the lines and crosses in a constantly readjusting *repoussoir* system of many unconnected linear elements.

One must see the original work to appreciate how painterly Mondrian's approach still was. Numerous *pentimenti* of little black lines appear under the white paint surface, which was built up as laboriously as any other of Mondrian's late Cubist or post-Cubist canvases (e.g. no. 75).

An iconographic fusion of the *Pier and Ocean* image with the Notre Dame des Champs façade is possible, for the drawing *Circular Composition: Church Façade* (no. 78) contains the same two box-like outlines at the top of the vertical pier axis in 79b (as also in S: c.c. 238). Whatever the degree of fusion of images, the *Pier and Ocean* series doubtless contains overtones of spiritual purification similar to those in other more overtly religious subjects. The small crosses do not refer merely to a specifically Christian context, and they may also be seen as resulting from an inversion of the containing grid system of the late Cubist works. The breaking away in this work from a strict oval boundary line goes beyond the axial enclosed composition used for *Circular Composition: Church Façade*, which can be considered the immediate stylistic predecessor of the *Pier and Ocean* series.

1915

Oil on canvas

33-1/2 x 39-3/8 in., 85 x 100 cm.

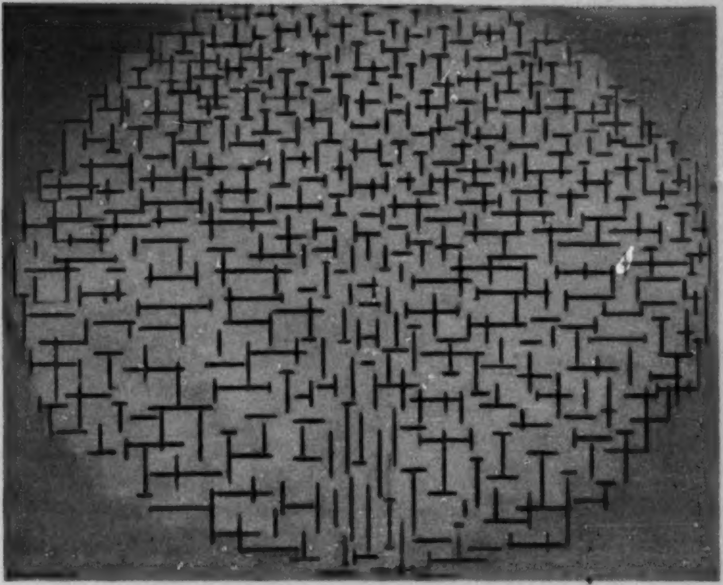
Signed lower left:
P. MONDRIAAN. '15.

Provenance:
acquired by present owner from
the *Hollandsche Kunstenaarskring*
exhibition, Amsterdam 1915 (no. 116)

Exhibitions: see K-M: 514;
in addition New York 1951, no. 15;
New York 1964, Marlborough no. 17

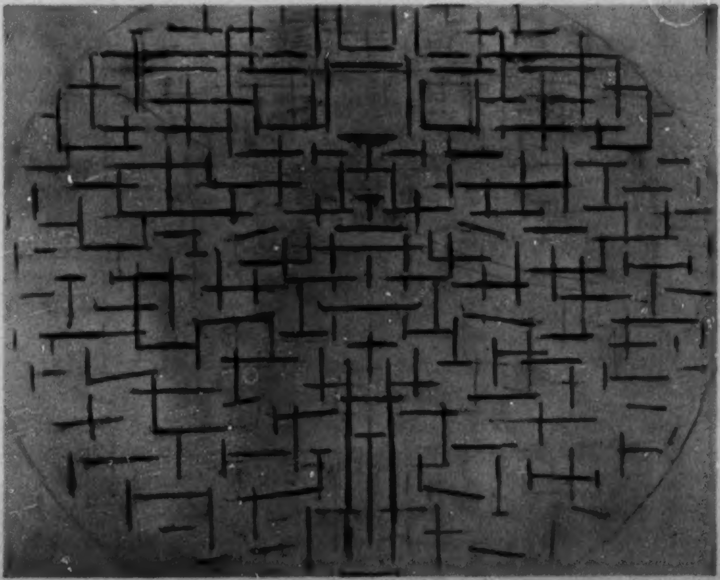
State Museum Krœller-Müller, Otterlo

To be exhibited in Toronto only



79a Composition No. 10: Pier and Ocean

79b Pier and Ocean



1914

Charcoal on paper

20-1/8 x 24-13/16 in., 51 x 63 cm.

Signed lower right
(inside oval): PM 14

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 136

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

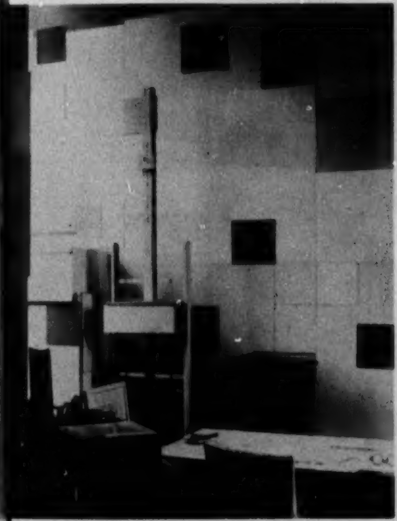
3

De Stijl and After:

In 1917 Mondrian agreed to cooperate with Theo van Doesburg and Bart van der Leck in publishing the periodical *De Stijl*, of which the first number appeared in October 1917. The origin and coherence of the *De Stijl* group is still debatable. Mondrian's ten years of membership, until his definitive break with van Doesburg over the latter's reintroduction of diagonal lines in his compositions *circa* 1925, apparently did not radically alter his development, although he did acknowledge the influence of the flat colour planes of van der Leck during the crucial years of 1916-17 when both worked at Laren. Mondrian's decision in 1916 to paint with only the pure plastic elements of line, plane and colour developed independently from his own earlier style. His 1918-19 paintings composed with an asymmetrical grid superimposed on a regular grid have no direct parallel in the work of other *De Stijl* members. His use of the primaries, red, yellow and blue, began at least as early as the late Cubist works of 1913-14, and his colours remained idiosyncratic throughout the *De Stijl* period, until 1922. Mondrian seems to have considered that year crucial in his career. Only then did he introduce relatively pure primaries and replace the varying bluish-grey background with an increasingly brilliant white. He also strengthened and simplified the black line structure, producing a stylistic formula which seemed definitive until the New York period of 1940-44.

The compositional structures of Mondrian's late works developed with absolute consistency and logic from year to year, and almost from one work to the next. For a decade after 1922 (excluding the more difficult question of the lozenge paintings) Mondrian's basic repertory was limited to a handful of compositional types. Even the introduction of the double line *circa* 1932 did not compromise the

1916-1944



MONDRIAN'S STUDIO

26, rue du Départ
Paris, *circa* 1930
Courtesy of Mme M. Donas

fundamental principles of his abstract work. By 1931, when his compositions had been reduced to an opposition of two or three black lines on a flat white ground, a consistent development towards a more complex grid began. Thereafter, one can still discover in the complex compositions of the mid and late 1930's a free synthesis of compositions deriving from the 1920's. Mondrian himself obscured the logic of this development by his additions and alterations in New York to compositions begun as early as 1935. These works can be recognized by the "42" or "43" added to an earlier date, but their original form is hard to detect. To uncover the pure style of the late 1930's the unbounded squares of colour and perhaps some of the lines must be regarded as later alterations.

Only in *New York City I* (no. 110) did Mondrian abandon the asymmetrical dispersion of black lines and colour planes on a white ground in favour of a grid system of greater balance between the oppositions of line and plane, colour and non-colour, and vertical and horizontal. There is a reminiscence here of his 1918-19 period of regular grids.

Each of the major works begun in New York is unique and represents a stylistic phase in itself, but all share the exclusion of black and the syncopated rhythms of overlappings, punctuations, and colour squares within colour squares. Many of his European devotees have found it difficult to accept Mondrian's New York paintings, but Mondrian himself no doubt regarded these works as the consummation of earlier intentions, using his basic vocabulary of plastic elements in a new way to form a completely organic style. The debate will continue, for Mondrian's final New York period suggests many interpretations and has already helped to initiate a variety of experiments by younger artists.

80 Composition: 1916

This is the only known work dated 1916, although some works dated 1917 were probably begun in the previous year (see no. 82). About this time Mondrian agreed to help Theo van Doesburg found the periodical *De Stijl*, which was first published in October 1917.

A careful comparison with the series of charcoal drawings of the Domburg church façade, mostly dated 1914 (S: c.c. 252-57), suggests that the ovoid format and traces of linear configurations, as in the uppermost pair of windows, were derived from that series. In this respect, *Composition: 1916* is to the Domburg façade drawings what *Composition with Lines* (K-M: 515) is to the *Pier and Ocean* drawings. In both paintings, the random diffusion of cross and line *emblemata* within a fluid spatial ambient seems improvised when compared with earlier works of these series, in which a greater degree of axial symmetry is retained. As in *Pier and Ocean* (nos. 79a and b), the cruciform figures should not be considered specifically Christian, although it is interesting that the work was once owned by a minister, who befriended Mondrian during the First World War.

Composition: 1916 is particularly important in Mondrian's development of a completely abstract art. The areas of colour interflow and yet balance with each other and with the punctuations of lines and crosses, which only partly function as boundaries to the colours. The three basic primary colours used here against a grey ground show considerable variation in tone and shade, and the yellow strongly resembles the ochre of Mondrian's Cubist period. Thus an ambivalence in subject matter and use of line and colour, compared with earlier and later works, allows us to see this work as the funnel through which all of Mondrian's thinking about style and content had to pass before the experiments with pure plastic elements of 1917 could begin.

1916

Oil on canvas and wood strip

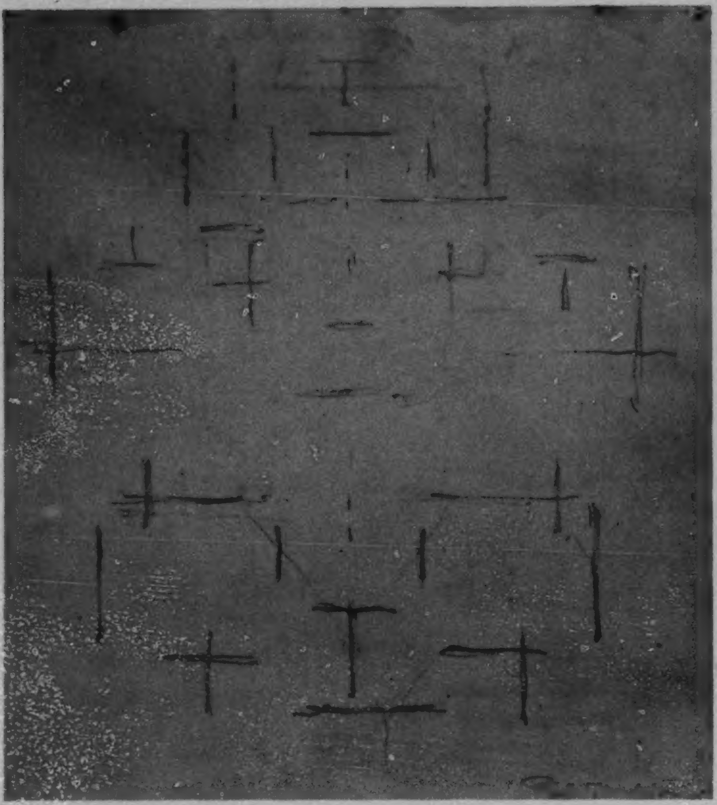
47-1/4 x 29-1/2 in., 120 x 74.9 cm.

Signed lower left (on wood strip):
P. MONDRIAAN. '16

Provenance: acquired from the artist
by Rev. H. van Assendelft of Gouda;
from Mrs Schijvens-van Assendelft, Zeist,
to Jon Nicholas Streep *circa* 1948;
via Sidney Janis Gallery
to present owner 27 May 1949

Exhibitions:
Amsterdam 1946, no. 78;
Basel 1947, no. 28;
New York 1949, no. 13;
New York 1957-58, no number;
Santa Barbara 1965, no. 49

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
New York



81

Composition based on Diamond Shape

1916-17

Charcoal on paper

19-3/4 x 17-5/8 in., 50.1 x 44.7 cm.

Signed lower right:
Piet Mondrian (added later?)

Provenance: Mondrian estate
to Harry Holtzman

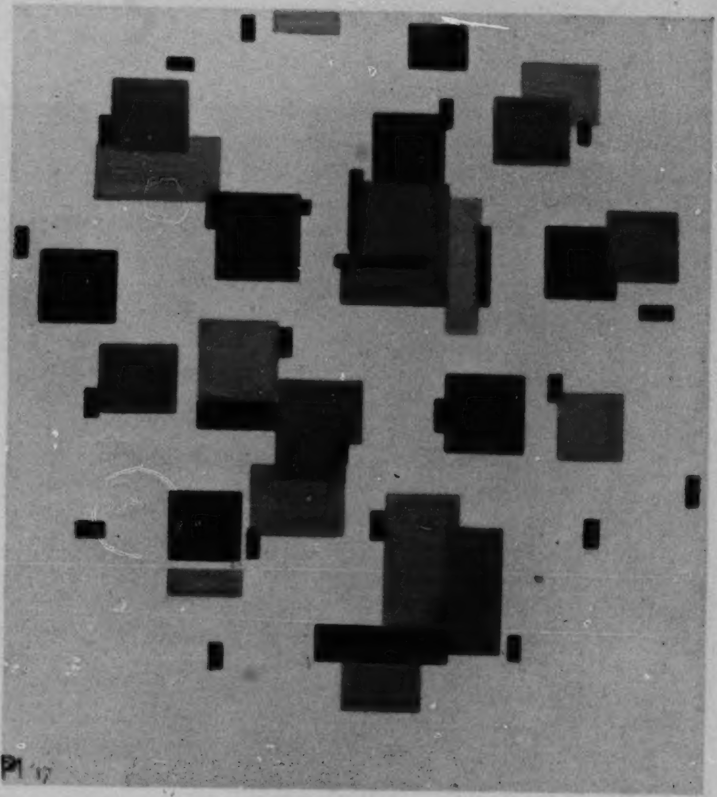
Mr Harry Holtzman

Seuphor leaves this work untitled and assigns it provisionally to 1914. However, Blok (GM: pp. 29-31) has related its square format and loose floating grid to two paintings in the Krœller-Müller Museum, known there as *Composition in Blue — A* and *Composition in Blue — B*, but which we have called *Compositions in Colour — A* and *B* (see no. 82). The original design visible on the reverse of *Composition in Colour — B* shows a positive similarity to this drawing in the disposition and greater length of the grid lines, in comparison with their appearance in the painting.

This drawing may thus have been a preliminary design for one of the two paintings, and this would explain the inclusion of a faint regular diamond or lozenge form in the drawing as a compositional anchor for the partly cruciform, partly ovoid and partly circular dispersal of the smaller images. Seuphor (p. 379) correctly places the reproduction of the drawing next to *Circular Composition: Church Façade* (no. 78) since, in composition and iconography, it directly links the relatively regular combination of circles and crosses in the earlier drawing with the more geometrical lozenge compositions of 1918-19 (no. 85 and S: c.c. 297-300).

82

Composition in Colour—B



1917

Oil on canvas

19-3/4 x 17-3/8 in., 50 x 44 cm.

Signed lower left:
PM '17 (superimposed monogram)

Provenance: acquired for present collection by H. P. Bremmer 1917

Exhibitions: see K-M: 517; in addition Amsterdam 1917, no. 47; New York 1964, Marlborough no. 18

State Museum Krœller-Müller, Otterlo

This painting and a companion piece at the Krœller-Müller Museum are known as *Composition in Blue — B* (K-M: 517) and *Composition in Blue — A* (K-M 516), respectively. These titles seem to be based on a misreading of the word *kleur* (colour) as *bleu,* from a hasty inscription (apparently by Mondrian) on the stretcher. This oversight has prevented the proper identification of these works as those exhibited in the *Hollandsche Kunstenaarskring* exhibition in Amsterdam, May 1917, under the titles *Compositie in kleur — A* and *B,* as nos. 46 and 47. In neither work does blue dominate over red and ochre. The colours in fact are variations of the three basic primaries and derive directly from *Composition: 1916* (no. 80). *Compositions in Colour — A* and *B* are Mondrian's last works in which colour areas and lines freely overlap on a two-dimensional plane. They can be considered, therefore, antecedent to the series of *Compositions with Colour Planes* (no. 83 and S: c.c. 285-89), in which the planes are generally isolated from each other in the surrounding white ground, and to various compositions of 1918-19 which preserve a separation between line and colour by imposing a rigid grid system (e.g. nos. 85 to 87).

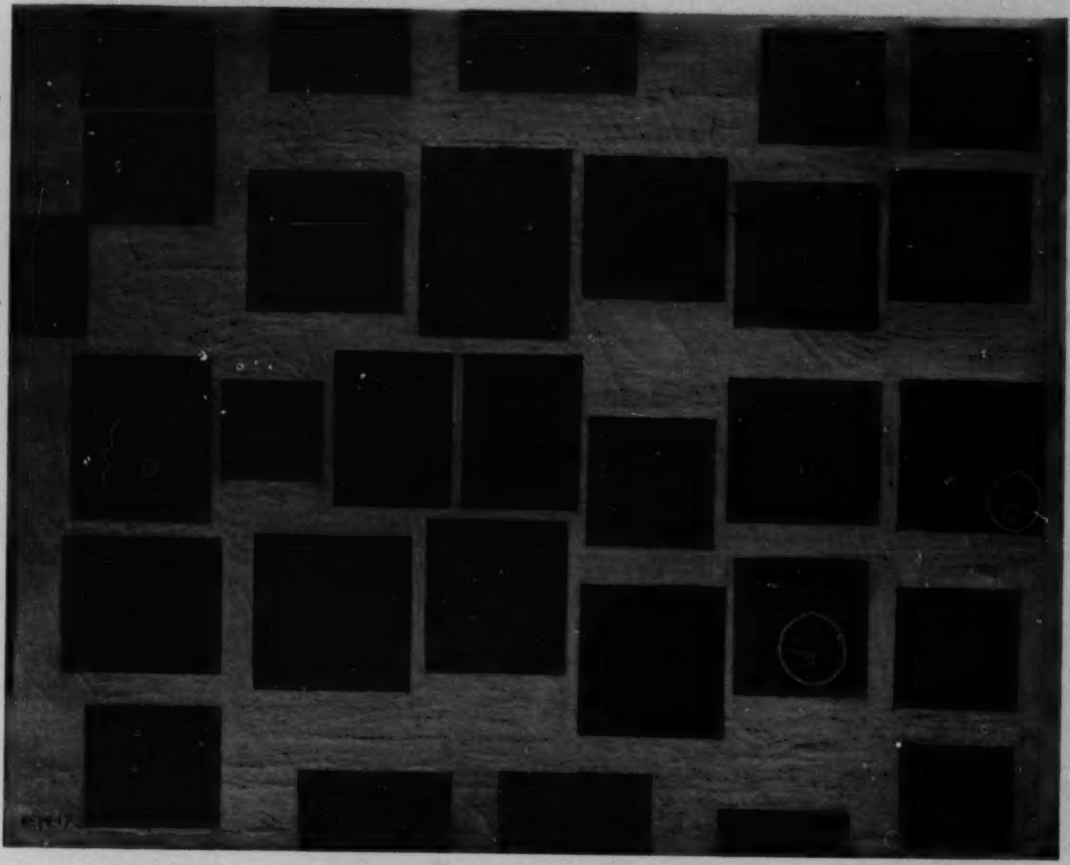
As in the related charcoal drawing (no. 81), *Composition in Colour — B* incorporates intentional ambiguities in the spatial relations of plane, line and neutral white background. There is also some ambivalence about whether the composition is organized as an ovoid or diamond-lozenge within the basically square format. Such multiple tensions produce not a sense of chaos, but a rhythmical pulsation as the eye jumps from one plane or line to the next.

83 Composition III with Colour Planes

This is one of five paintings in which Mondrian freely suspended large rectangles of colour against or within a white ground (see S: c.c. 285-89). The date of this group must follow that of *Compositions in Colour — A* and *B* (see no. 82) and *Composition in Black and White* (K-M: 515), which were exhibited in May 1917. The overlapping planes which relate those three works to the earlier *Composition: 1916* (no. 80) are not found in the *Compositions with Colour Planes*, and the white ground and colour areas are executed in a much less painterly brush stroke than in Mondrian's transitional works of 1916-17. Only the *pentimenti* of large squares in several works of this group indicate that Mondrian here too worked empirically rather than from a final study. Finally, this work is not signed with the superimposed monogram of the three paintings exhibited in 1917 and retained by only one of the group of *Compositions with Colour Planes* (S: c.c. 289). In *Composition III with Colour Planes*, an earlier superimposed monogram has been replaced by one of the first PM block monograms, which Mondrian used for the rest of his career.

The mixed and highly tinted colours in this series are the primaries characteristic of Mondrian's paintings since his post-Cubist period. This seems to be the only feature common to the five compositions, since there is no consistency in the relative number of rectangles and squares or in their colour distribution. Moreover, the sides of the rectangles never form absolute right angles. These slight deviations from geometric regularity produce the fascinating ambivalences of spatial interplay that had characterized his work of the previous two or three years. This group marks the last appearance of unbounded colour squares floating within the extremely limited space implied by the white ground.

It is interesting that Mondrian chose this type of composition for the background of a self-portrait done at the request of Mr S. B. Slijper and dated 1918 (GM: 147). This self-portrait and the *Compositions with Colour Planes* anticipate the appearance of Mondrian's subsequent Paris, London and New York studios (see p. 159 and S: ill. pp. 32, 36 to 38), in which unbounded colour rectangles seem to have always been placed on the walls. One may therefore assume that, even throughout the following two decades in which the colours in Mondrian's compositions were rigidly confined within a grid of black lines, there remained the possibility of the free relation of colour planes to which he returned during his New York period (nos. 107, 108 and 112).



1917

Oil on canvas

18-7/8 x 24 in., 48 x 61 cm.

Signed lower left: PM 17

Provenance: see GM: 145;
acquired 1949

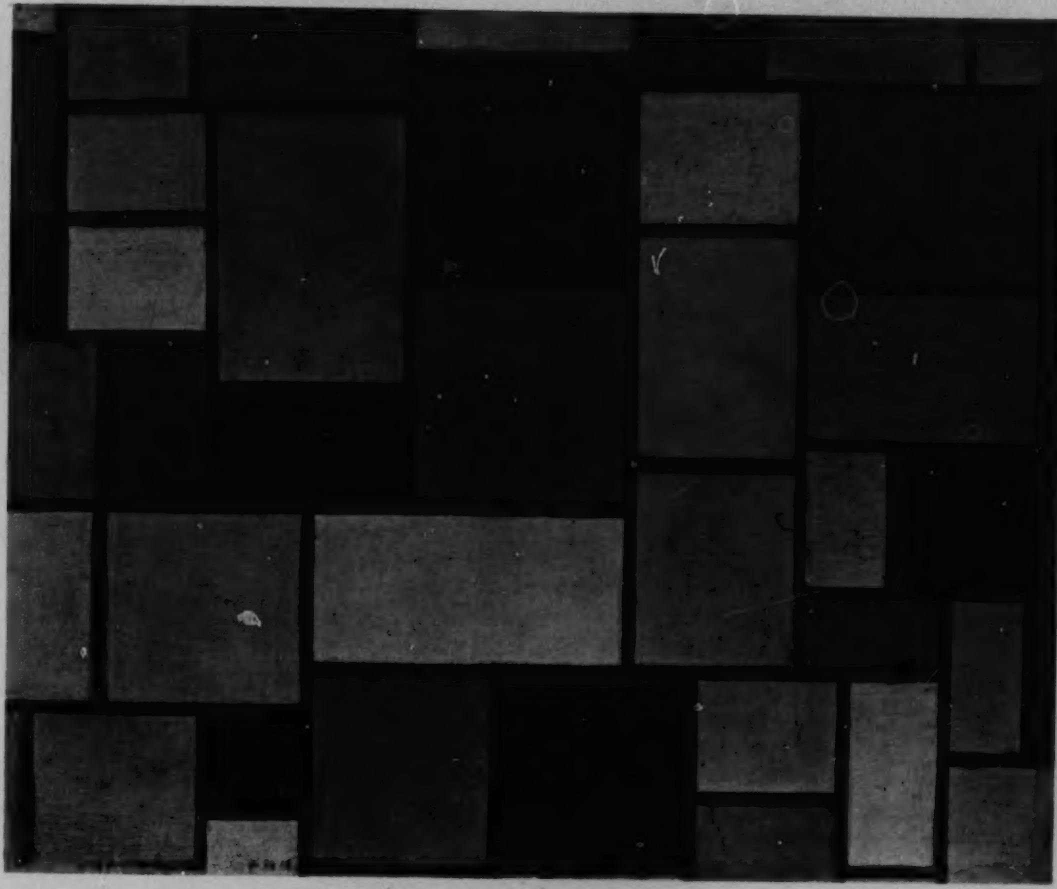
Exhibitions: see GM: 145

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

84 Composition: Colour Planes with Grey Contours

This work is unique in Mondrian's early abstract experiments. Seuphor was justified in illustrating it next to several works of 1919-20, although it bears an unchallengeable date of 1918 and therefore precedes at least some 1918-19 paintings which contain a regular grid (e.g. nos. 85 and 86). It apparently evolved from the two *Compositions in Colour* (no. 82 and S: c.c. 290) and the group of *Compositions with Colour Planes* of 1917 (see no. 83), in which the sides of squares and rectangles seldom continue in the direction of those found in adjacent colour planes. It also links these works with *Composition with Red, Blue and Yellow-Green* (see no. 88). It may best be described as a less systematically composed painting with subdued colours in the style of several paintings based on a regular grid (nos. 86a and b and S: c.c. 296 and 300).

Of greatest interest in this work is its specific use of colour. As the owner pointed out to this writer, a close examination shows that Mondrian has mixed small amounts of pigment from his variants of the three primaries into their individually related white or grey complements. The late Georges Vantongerloo attributed this habit, shared by several members of the *De Stijl* group, to the influence of the colour theories of Wilhelm Ostwald, whose works (e.g. *Die Farbenfibel,* 1917) were standard reading for the group. Ostwald believed that his theory of three measurable elements of colour — hue, white and black — was closer to nature than the theories of his predecessors, Chevreul and Helmholtz, who derived their spectrum from refracted light. Although Ostwald permitted a place in his spectrum for green as well as red, yellow and blue, his reduction of the usual seven-colour spectrum and his de-emphasis of complementary relations might easily have attracted Mondrian, who was not, however a dogmatic follower of any colour theorist.



1918

Oil on canvas

19-5/16 x 23-13/16 in., 49 x 60.5 cm.

Signed lower left: PM 18

Provenance: acquired from the Dutch Art Market by Dr Gerbrand Dekker *circa* 1920; to present owner *circa* 1950

Exhibitions: New York 1951;
The Hague 1955, no. 96;
Zürich 1955, no. 75;
Dortmund 1964, no. 11

Max Bill

85 Lozenge with Grey Lines

This painting is the only known work dated 1918 which is based on a visible regular geometric grid. It was signed and given to Mr van den Briel before Mondrian returned to Paris after World War I. Its structure is adumbrated somewhat by *Composition in Line,* 1917 (K-M: 515) and *Composition based on Diamond Shape,* 1917 (no. 81), but the regularity of this work and a pendant at the Philadelphia Museum (S: c.c. 298) results from an essentially new principle of plastic design. Within its grid divisions, intermediary grey spots appear and flicker at the intersections in a *trompe-l'oeil* effect. These secondary visual effects, which were not likely important to Mondrian, are virtually unavoidable in such a composition. The original impression of static balance is also relieved by the irregular width of the lines and the variations of intensity in the grey lines and the greyish-white fill. An asymmetrical counterbalance of a heavier grid, superimposed on the division into diagonal rows of eight lozenges, was added to the pendant version and is also present, although less emphasized, in this slightly earlier work (see nos. 86a and b).

1918

Oil on canvas

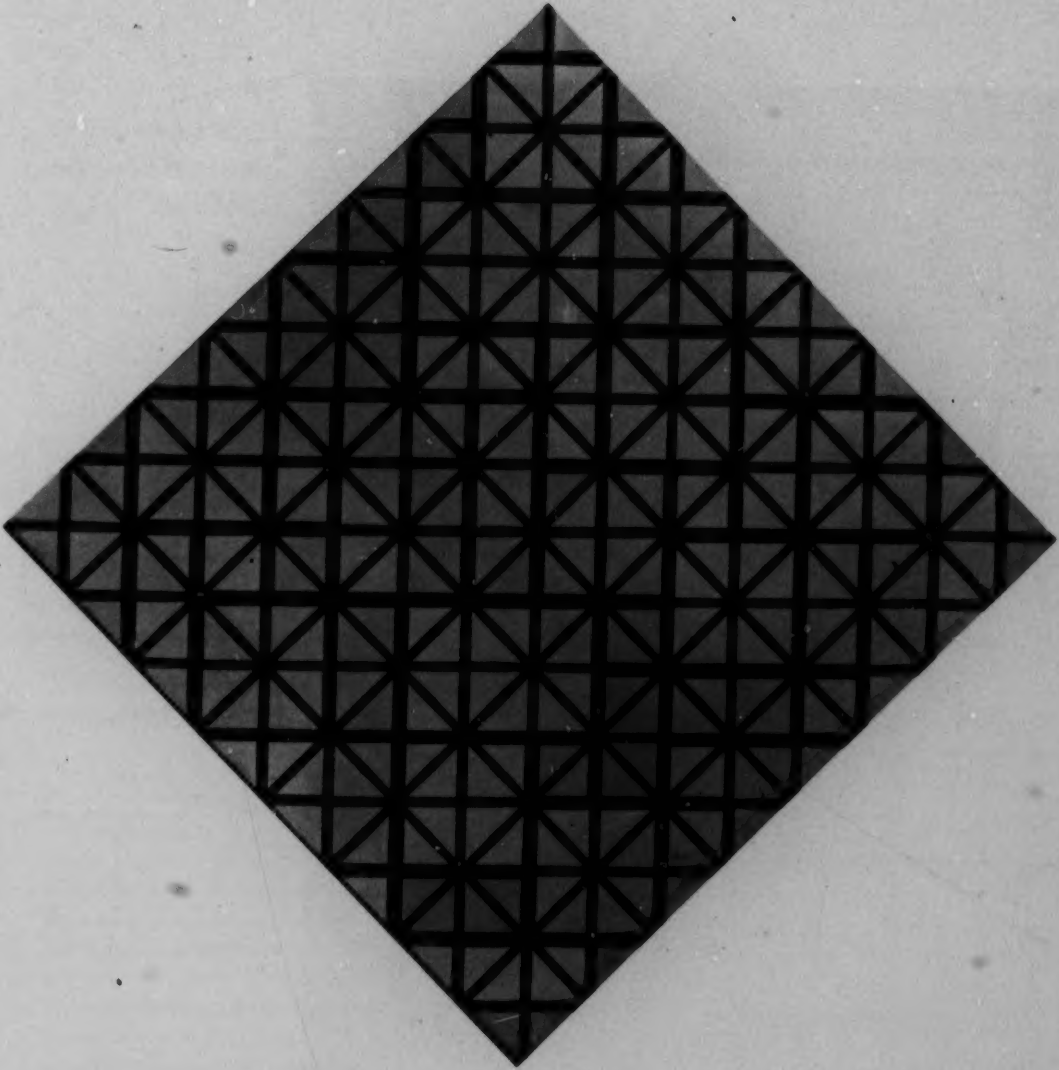
Diagonal dimension: 47-5/8 in., 121 cm.

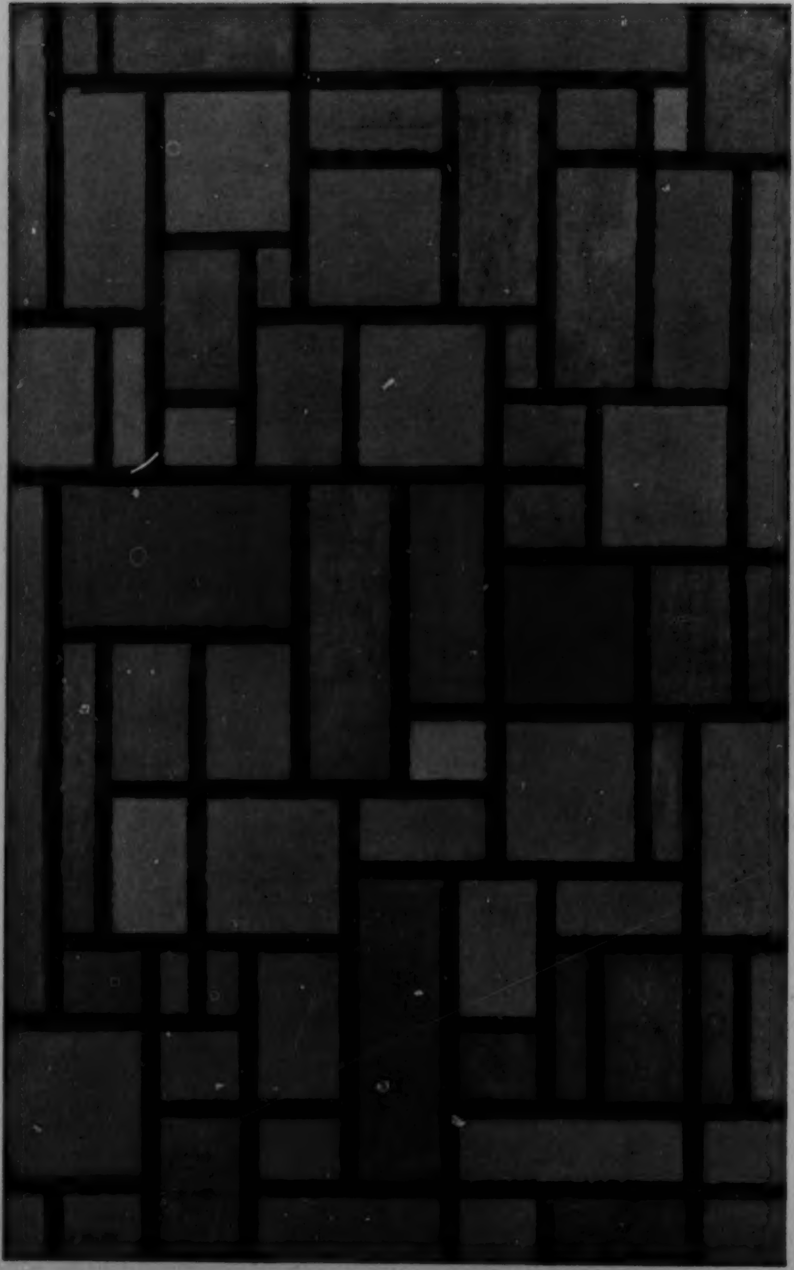
Signed lower centre: P 18 M

Provenance:
to A. P. van den Briel 1918-19;
given to the present owner 1956

Exhibitions: see GM: 146;
Dortmund 1964, no. 2

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague





86a

Composition with Grey and Light Brown

1918

Oil on canvas

31-3/4 x 19-1/2 in., 78 x 49.5 cm.

Signed lower left: PM 18

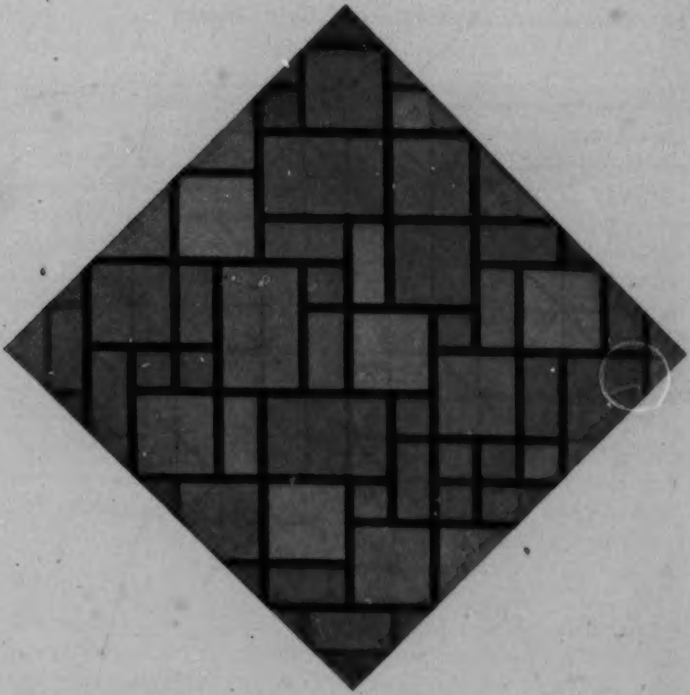
Provenance: to present owner 1963

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston,
Gift, Mr and Mrs Pierre Schlumberger

To be exhibited in Toronto only

86b

Composition in Diamond Shape



1919

Oil on canvas

Diagonal dimension: 33 in., 84 cm.

Signed lower centre: PM '19

Provenance and exhibitions:
see K-M: 518; Basel 1964-65, no. 37a

State Museum Krœller-Müller, Otterlo

To be exhibited in Toronto and
Philadelphia only

Although they have different formats, these two compositions are part of a conceptually homogenous group of paintings based, like the "checkerboard" compositions (see no. 87), on a regular grid substructure to which asymmetric configurations of line and/or colour have been added. This is particularly evident in *Composition in Diamond Shape,* which has the same underlying grid and superimposed rectilinear configuration that is seen faintly in *Lozenge with Grey Lines* (no. 85) and in a companion painting in lozenge form at the Philadelphia Museum (S: c.c. 298). Although a report from the owner indicates that no grid is visible on the surface of *Composition with Grey and Light Brown,* one can be reasonably sure that, like all other paintings in this group (see also S: c.c. 295, 296 and 300), the composition is based on a regular grid pattern, the smallest square of which is multiplied in combinations forming colour areas of no apparent structural order. As in a black and white variant of the Houston painting (S: c.c. 295), unfortunately misdated by Mondrian in New York to 1915 rather than 1918 or 1919, the grid is divided into the same 16 x 16 pattern used for both "checkerboard" compositions. In structure, this painting is no more than one of the "checkerboards" on its side, with the asymmetrical grid pattern assuming the function of the colour distribution in those works.

Although *Composition with Grey and Light Brown* and *Composition in Diamond Shape* are dated a year apart, they can be called products of the same conceptual and stylistic phase, since Mr van den Briel, who visited Mondrian shortly after his return to Paris during 1919, recollects that the artist had by then begun to work in a different manner.

87 Composition: Checkerboard, Light Colours

The "checkerboard" title for both this and a pendant in sombre colours (GM: 149) could never have been given seriously by Mondrian although such an obvious analogy would not have surprised or disturbed him. A regular grid of thin grey lines divides the composition into sixteen rows of rectangles in both directions so that each rectangle preserves the proportions of the picture format. This work, like *Composition: Colour Planes with Grey Contours* of 1918 (no. 84), is devoted to a study of colour. Unlike the pendant, it uses rather light tints of the three primaries, and three shades of grey which may include very slight quantities of pigments of the positive colours. In contrast to the geometric grid, the distribution of colour follows no mathematical pattern, nor is the number of colours or shades of grey comprehensible in terms of mathematical proportions. A close examination shows that some of Mondrian's colours were superimposed on earlier choices in the manner of many earlier works (e.g. no. 75), and we may assume that he selected the colour for each area empirically while standing before the canvas. It is therefore not surprising that no preparatory drawings for this or other grid designs of the 1918-19 period exist (S: c.c. 292-300). In this canvas Mondrian used colour alone to create the asymmetrical balance that was characteristic of most of the grid designs of 1918-19 (e.g. nos. 86a and b and S: c.c. 293, 295, 296, 298 and 300).

1919

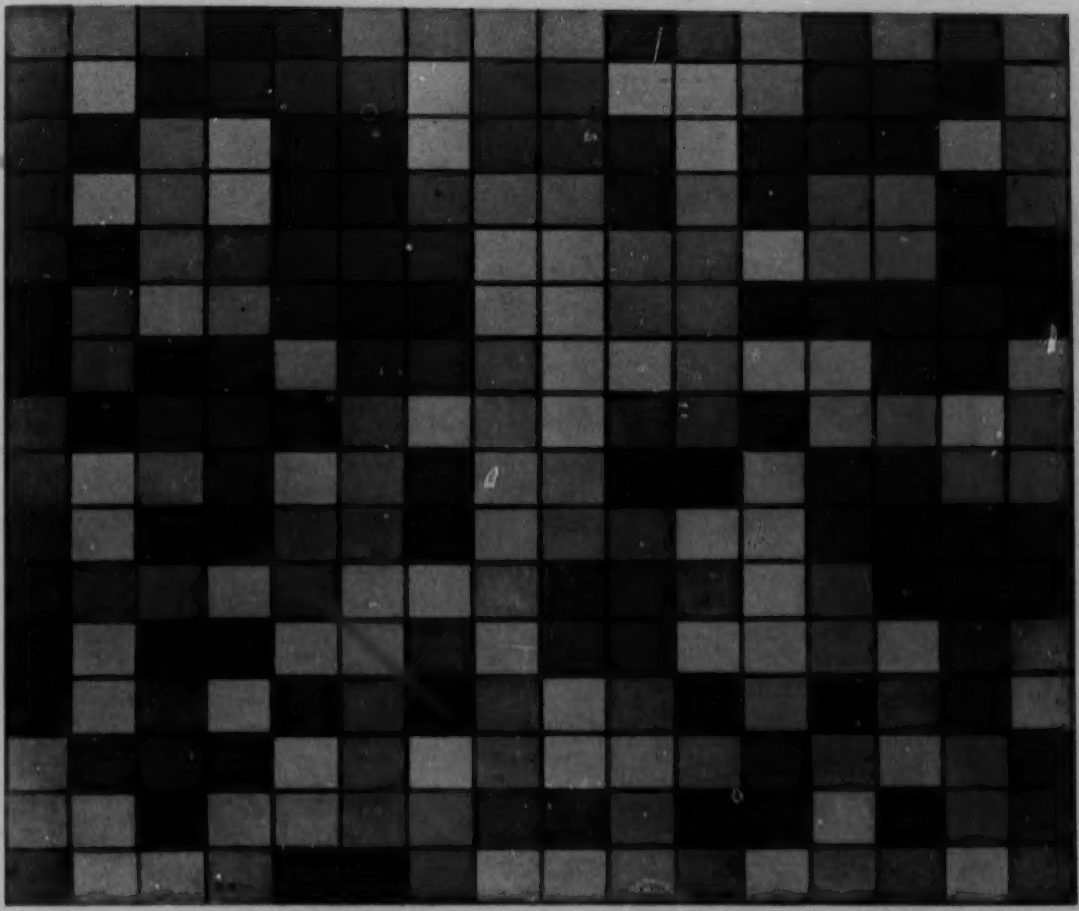
Oil on canvas

33-7/8 x 41-3/4 in., 86 x 106 cm.

Signed lower left: PM '19

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 148

Mr S. B. Slijper, on loan to
the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague



88 Composition with Red, Blue and Yellow-Green

This is one of a stylistically related group of paintings dating from 1919 to early 1921 (S: c.c. 302-06 and 313). In comparison with the grid works of 1919 (e.g. no. 86b and S: c.c. 296), they show an increased variation in the scale of the component squares and rectangles, although the central area of this example is based on a regular six-part grid. The primaries deviate considerably from a standard of purity. Moreover, each primary seems reciprocally related to the neighbouring light grey or white area, as in *Composition: Colour Planes with Grey Contours* (no. 84), and there is perhaps some pigment of the related primary mixed into the non-colours. The intermediate grid lines vary in width and intensity according to the need of separating specific colour areas. Thus, although the grid is less prominent than in later works, it is integral to the composition, which is based primarily on contrasts between planes and colours.

The complex relationships of its colours give movement and dynamic balance to this painting. Its component squares and rectangles, although more limited in variety, exhibit some of the repetitive quality found in works of the previous year. The greater contrast of scale in the colour areas shows Mondrian's emerging demand for ever simpler principles of design, and indeed one could think of this work as an enlarged detail of earlier asymmetrical grids.

1920

Oil on canvas

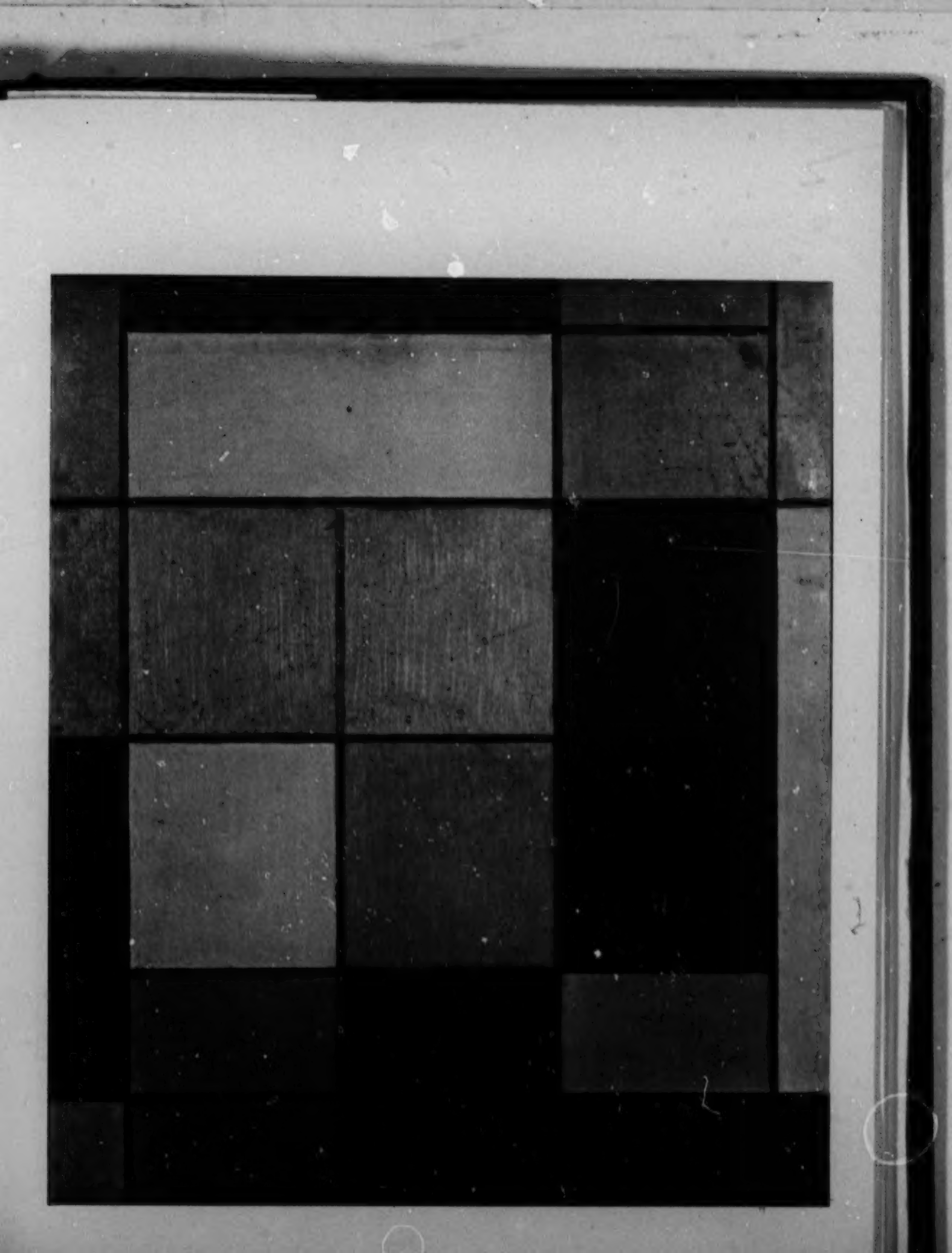
24-3/8 x 22-1/2 in., 67 x 57 cm.

Signed lower centre: PM 20

Provenance:
acquired near date of execution at
a *De Stijl* group lottery by J. J. P. Oud;
to present owner *circa* 1964;
also previously on loan for several
years to the Boymans-van Beuningen
Museum, Rotterdam

Exhibitions:
The Hague 1955, no. 102;
Dortmund 1964, no. 4

Wilhelm Hack collection



89 Tableau II

This and a companion piece (S: c.c. 307) are almost exactly the same size and are comparable in structure and colour. Because of their unique 1921/25 date, they may be tentatively identified as the works listed as *Tableau I* and *II* and illustrated with ten others on a notebook sheet (Holtzman collection) which was a record of works sent to a German exhibition, perhaps that at Kühl and Kühn in Dresden in 1925. Mondrian's "-25" probably indicates not a continuous period of work, but minor retouching or refinishing at that later date.

In stylistic development this work immediately follows several compositions of 1920 (see no. 88), but in comparison with them it shows greater intensity in colour contrast, greater tension between the vertical and horizontal elements, and a greater structural emphasis in the black rather than grey linear grid. The primary colours have also begun to assume a more classic purity, although they are by no means unrelated to their neigbours on the colour spectrum. One is reminded of Ostwald's colour system (see no. 84), since the canvas includes black and at least two tones of light grey. Ostwald, in contrast to earlier theorists, treated black and white as positive colours in the spectrum. The colour and composition appear to have been worked out empirically, although a tendency to repeat rectangles or squares throughout the composition perhaps reflects a residual influence of the more equalized grid works of 1918-19.

Mondrian set the grey strip frame back about one quarter of an inch from the picture plane, but none of the lines or colour areas seems to extend on the canvas past the edge of the picture surface. Indeed, at the lower left one line stops before the edge of the canvas, as is characteristic of Mondrian's work in the early 1920's (see no. 90).

1921/25

Oil on canvas

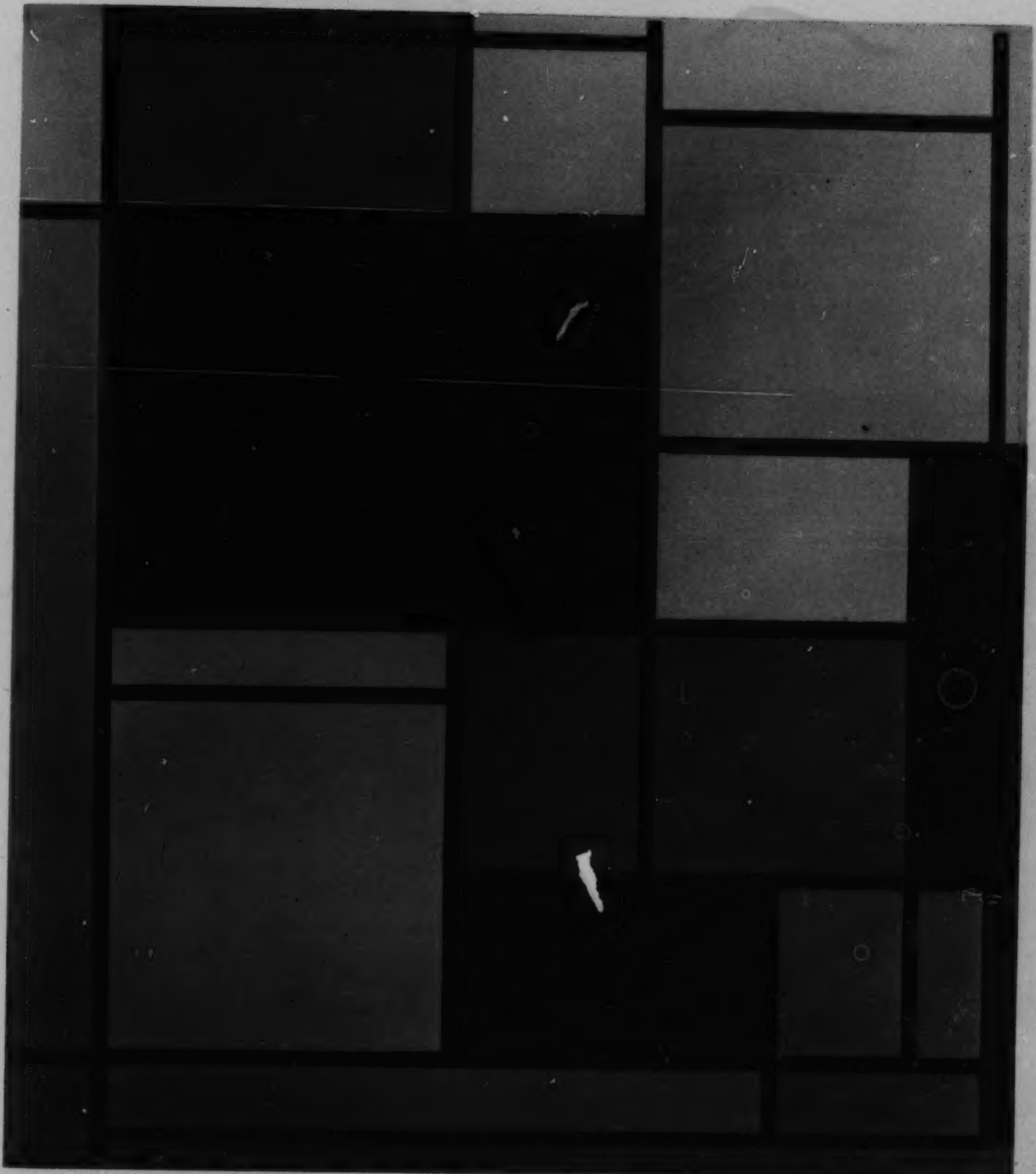
29-9/16 x 25-5/8 in., 75 x 65 cm.

Signed lower left: PM '21-25

Provenance: acquired from the artist by
Mr Bienert, Dresden, *circa* 1926;
to present owner *circa* 1950

Exhibitions: Dresden 1925(?);
Dresden 1926(?), no. 218;
The Hague 1955, no. 109;
Zürich 1955, no. 89;
Basel 1964-65, no. 41

Max Bill



90 Composition with Red, Yellow, Blue and Black

This work is one of the most intriguing experiments of the period *circa* 1921, when Mondrian evolved out of the multiple-square compositions of 1917-20 a few basic structural types which were to suffice for the following fifteen years at least. Despite certain affinities of style and structure with other works from 1920-21 (e.g. nos. 88 and 89), such as the repetition of rectilinear proportions, the introduction of a single large square as compositional focus is certainly not accidental and anticipates later works. Although neither unique (see S: c.c. 317 and 318) nor completely unprecedented in works of 1920 (e.g. S: c.c. 310 and 313, the latter misdated to 1921), the structural simplicity of this work strikingly approximates typical canvases of 1928-31 (see no. 98).

The border areas illustrate a practice common to much *De Stijl* production during these years. According to the late Georges Vantongerloo, the practice originated from a fear that the abstract composition would lose its organic compactness if all lines were carried through to the edge of the composition, bisecting it completely. Thus one or more lines were cut off short of the edge, as happens several times in this work. Although Mondrian eventually abandoned this practice, it illustrates his caution in seeking new solutions even after he had embarked on a stylistic pilgrimage that few artists then dared to follow.

1921

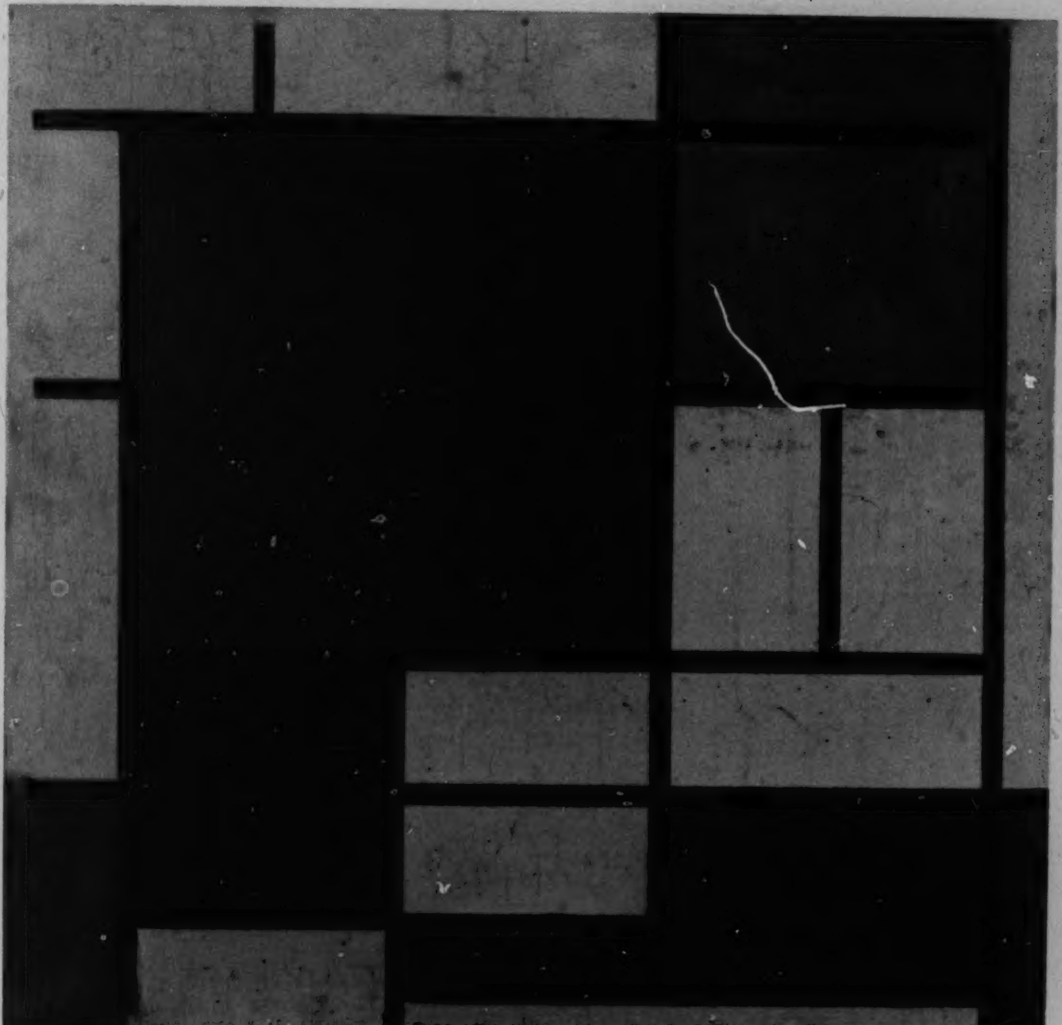
Oil on canvas

23-7/16 x 23-7/16 in., 59.5 x 59.5 cm.

Signed lower centre: PM '21

Provenance and exhibitions:
see GM: 151

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague



91 Composition

This work and *Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue* (GM: 153) exemplify Mondrian's search for grandeur in his 1921 paintings. Although no single area has become dominant, this work could be considered a development from another composition of 1921 (no. 90), from which the four elongated lateral strips and one or two interior divisions have been deleted and the large block in the upper left has been transposed to the right. This analysis does not imply a direct descent of one composition from the other, but suggests that Mondrian evolved simpler basic structural compositions step by step, if haltingly, from works with many internal divisions to those with fewer. *Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue* has a light blue ground, but this painting uses a variety of light greys only slightly tinted towards blue. The resulting greater expressive severity anticipates the gradual substitution of a pure white ground for the intermediary one based on two or more greys.

In this painting we again discover reciprocal relations between the primary colours and adjacent grey areas. Each colour area counterbalances an adjacent negative grey area and combines with other colour areas to form larger units in the total design. The composition can be analyzed as four areas: a vertical rectangle extending from the red strip at the upper left three-quarters of the way down the canvas; the small horizontal rectangle in the lower left dominated by blue; the square filling in the lower right quarter of the canvas and including yellow and black; and the largest square in bluish grey at the upper right.

These reciprocal relations, which reflect Mondrian's working habits of the previous three years (see nos. 84 and 88) are by no means the dominant factor in this stately work. The great delicacy of the structural and colour balances and the pervasive sense of rest and quietude are so striking that this painting could be described as having the iconic simplicity of a fourteenth-century *Andachtsbild*, or private devotional painting.

1921

Oil on canvas

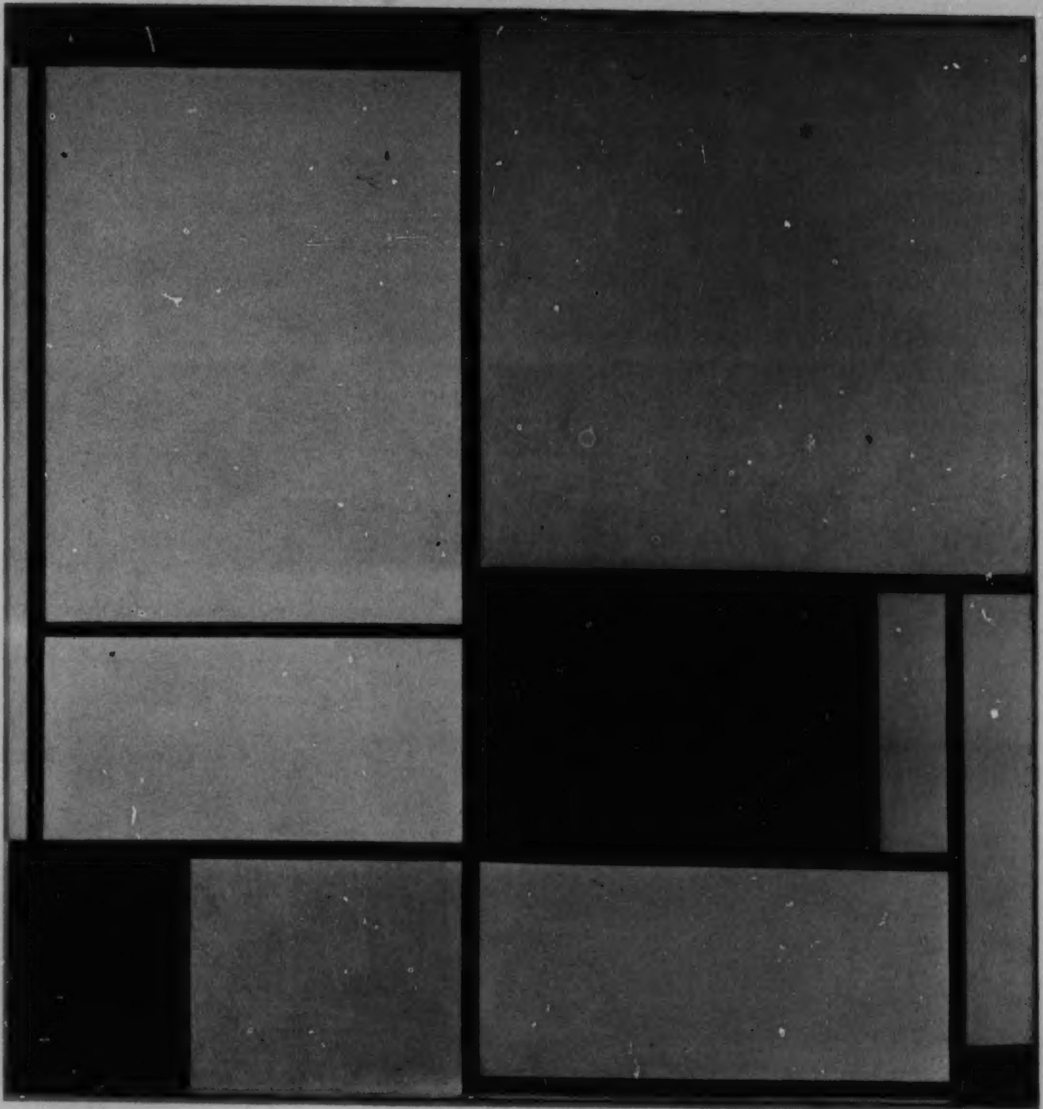
40-3/4 x 39-1/4 in., 103.5 x 99.5 cm.

Signed lower right: PM 21

Provenance: ex collection Bartos,
New York; via Gallery Beyeler
to present owner 1965

Exhibitions: Basel 1964-65, no. 40

Private collection, Germany



92 Study for Tableau I

1921

Charcoal on paper

34-3/4 x 23-3/4 in., 88.2 x 60.3 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: with Mondrian estate
to Harry Holtzman

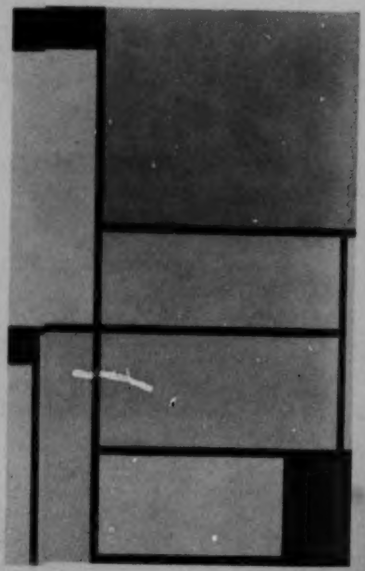
Mr Harry Holtzman

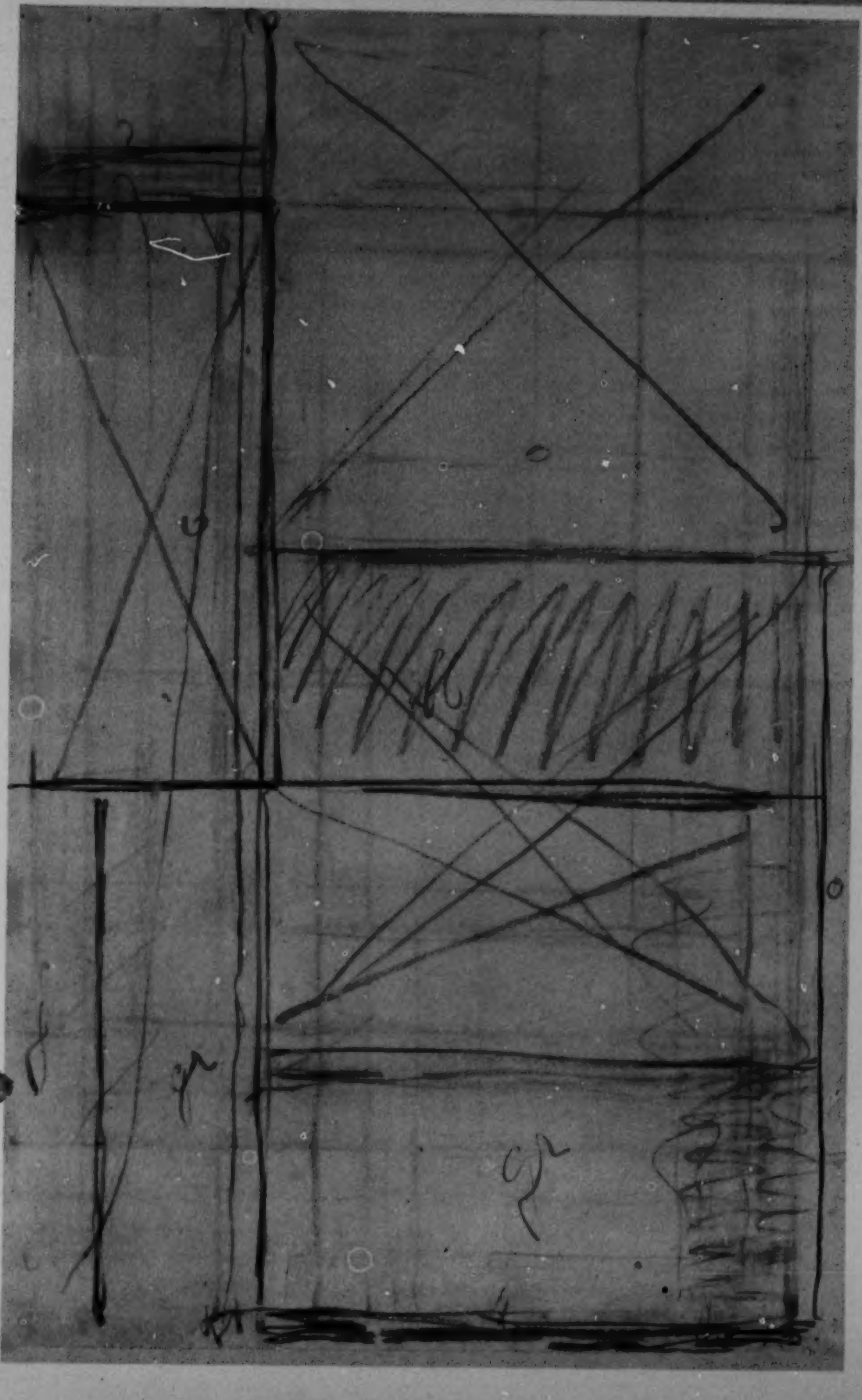
This drawing is the only extant penultimate preparatory sketch for a known painting of Mondrian's *De Stijl* period. *Tableau I* (fig. 24) is virtually the same size and shows roughly the same structural divisions.

The drawing illuminates two major points of historical interest. First, it shows clearly that Mondrian's compositions of *circa* 1921 were not designed according to an ideal rule. The sketchy lines, his crossing out the blue area in the centre right, and his moving the red area from upper left to the larger section at the upper right indicate his free empirical technique in working out a final balance of colour and line relationships. One understands why only in abstract paintings could Mondrian find the freedom of design which dependence on a natural subject ordinarily denies.

Secondly, the inclusion of small circles in three areas shows that Mondrian's conception of white and black still involved a sense of positive and negative values, although the black included in the painting was not indicated by letters in the drawing. Two squares also have indications of grey *(gr)*, and since the non-colour areas of the painting are divided into degrees of white and grey, we can interpret both drawing and painting as expressing the theory of colours contained in Mondrian's *De Stijl* articles: "just as yellow, blue and red may be mixed with white and yet remain primary colours, black may too" *(De Stijl* II: 30). Thus in these works, the white and grey areas are thought of as impure, relative to black and the primaries, whereas in Mondrian's later works the non-colour areas evolve into a unified white ground which covers the whole picture surface, offering the greatest possible contrast to the independent areas of colour.

figure 24





93 Composition

This undated work preserves some of the blue-grey colouring found in typical works of 1921 (e.g. no. 91), but the compositional prominence given to the rectangular core area approximates the structure of many works which dominated Mondrian's art after 1922. The four horizontal divisions, however, make it viritually unique among these works, and the pronounced vertical format is almost equally rare, being found again chiefly in works *circa* 1927-28 (e.g. S: c.c. 364 and 367 and an unpublished work in the Holtzman collection). Certain other unpublished drawings (Holtzman collection) indicate that this vertical format did interest Mondrian in the early 1920's, and point to an evolution from the more or less equally scaled interior divisions in *Study for Tableau I* (no. 92) towards one large area surrounded on two or more sides by a series of smaller squares or rectangles. This work contains the compositional divisions for most of the very few composition types used during the following decade.

1921-22

Oil on canvas

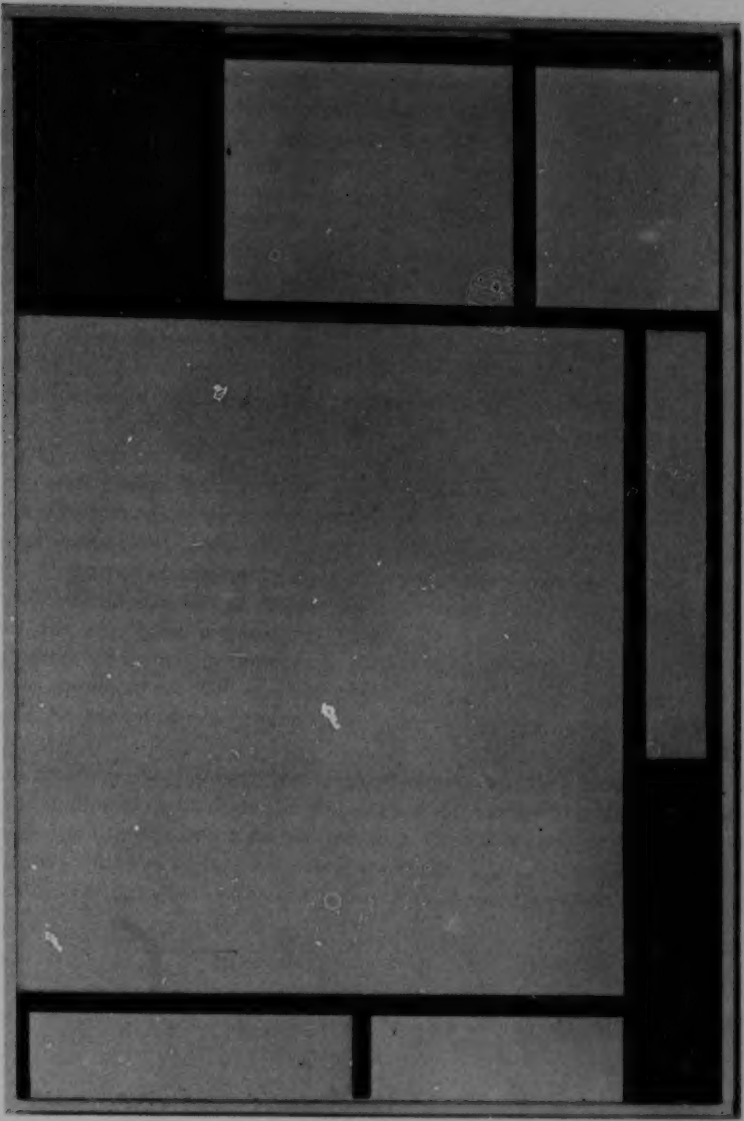
31-1/2 x 20 in., 80 x 50.7 cm.

Signed lower right:
PM (superimposed monogram)

Provenance:
from K. Legat, The Hague,
to Jon Nicholas Streep *circa* 1946;
thereafter in New York art market
and Leo Castelli collection;
to present owners 14 May 1955
from Rose Fried Gallery, New York

Dr and Mrs Israel Rosen

To be exhibited in Toronto and
Philadelphia only



94 Lozenge Composition in a Square

Seuphor's attributed date of *circa* 1926 for this work (S: c.c. 404) is a good approximation, although the structure recalls the period *circa* 1921 as well (e.g. no. 91 and fig. 24). It once hung in the studio of the dancer Palucca who was the wife of Mr Bienert of Dresden. She would therefore seem to be the person named in an illustration of a design of a room interior by Mondrian published in the magazine *Vouloir* no. 25, 1927 as *"Salon de Madame B, à Dresden circa 1927"*. It is thus reasonable to assume that the *Lozenge Composition in a Square* was acquired by that date, perhaps at, or resulting from, an exhibition held in 1925 at Kühl and Kühn in Dresden (since Bienert may have owned more than one *Lozenge* by Mondrian).

On a sketch-book page (Holtzman collection) illustrating most of the works sent to an exhibition in Germany *circa* 1925 there is a reference to the diamond format as *"losangique pyramidal"*, but unfortunately the diagram shows no interior divisions. Other sketch-book pages showing compositions typical of the early or mid 1920's include diamond compositions with changes of proportion comparable to those in *Study for Tableau I* (no. 92) and designations of + and o, apparently for lighter and darker shades of white and grey. In the Rothschild lozenge painting there are at least two and perhaps three variants of white.

It is remarkable that more than half of Mondrian's lozenge compositions of the 1920's and 1930's seem to date between the years 1925 and 1927, almost as if in protest against Theo van Doesburg's decision *circa* 1925 to reintroduce diagonals in his abstract compositions. Mondrian used the lozenge format to reassert the primacy of the vertical-horizontal duality, since he thereby frees his interior rectilinear elements from too strong a relation with the sides of the picture format.

Lozenge Composition in a Square is related compositionally to a smaller version (S: c.c. 401) and a somewhat earlier work (S: c.c. 400), which, although containing a completely enclosed square at the left, in most other respects seems to be a slightly telescoped version of the Rothschild painting. All of the lozenge compositions of the 1920's and 1930's (see S: p. 392) can be interpreted as variations or inversions of other lozenge compositions, from which Mondrian has deleted or to which he has added specific lines or colour planes.

Despite the lozenge format, a stylistic unity with works in the more common square format remains. The sturdy black lines and solid colours of this work can be related to square paintings of a comparable date (e.g. nos. 97 and 98). A close examination of the imposing and stable linear structure of this monumental painting shows that many of the black lines were altered in width after the basic grid divisions had been determined to achieve both grandeur and an infinitely subtle balance *circa* 1925

Oil on canvas

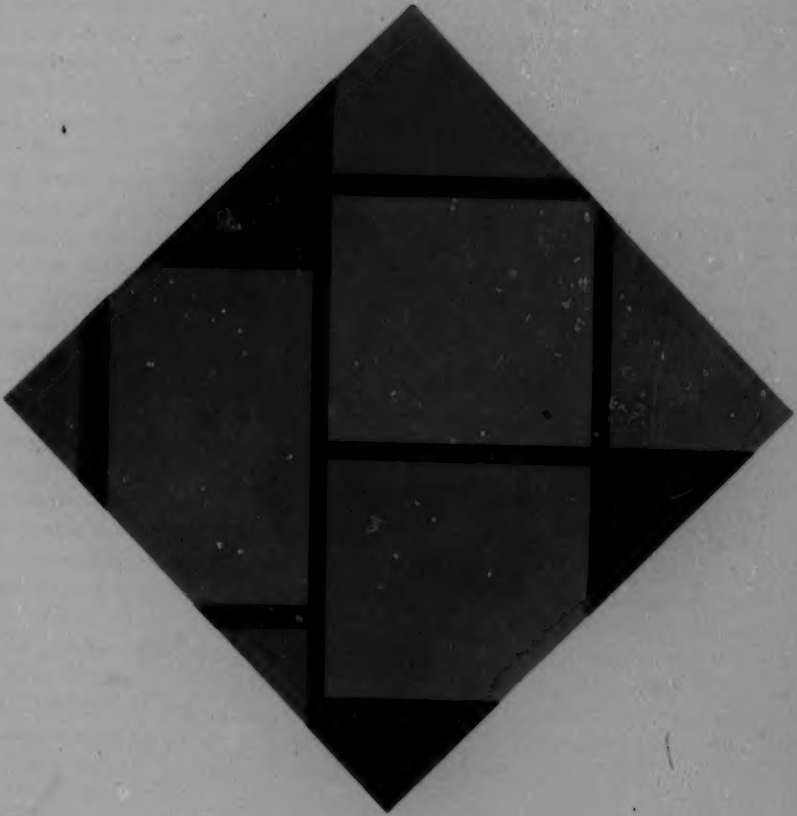
Diagonal dimension:
40 in., 101.5 cm.

Signed lower centre: PM

Provenance:
from Bienert collection, Dresden,
to Rudolf Springer Gallery, Berlin;
to Jon Nicholas Streep *circa* 1951;
John Senior collection; to present
owner *via* Sidney Janis Gallery

Exhibitions:
New York 1960, no. 24;
New York 1963, no. 23

Herbert and Nannette Rothschild



95 Tableau-Poème

The work exhibited is one of an edition of one hundred lithographs executed under Michel Seuphor's supervision in 1953 from the model of the original gouache of 1928 (S: ill. p. 195, c.c. 440). Since the untouched white paper sections in the gouache have faded, the lithographs in some ways better preserve its original appearance and colour contrasts. Seuphor (S: pp. 194-96) gives an account of the collaborative creation of the gouache for the dual purpose of promulgating abstract Neo-Plastic art and attracting interest to the artistic quarter in Paris where Mondrian lived.

Seuphor also mentions that the composition of *Tableau-Poème* relates to that of a unique, large painting of the same year (S: ill. p. 276 and c.c. 367), which can be read as a somewhat purified reinterpretation of *Tableau I* (fig. 24; also S: ill. p. 165 and c.c. 319). The composition of another painting, *Composition with Red, Black and White* of 1931 (S: ill. p. 288 and c.c. 361), is essentially the same as that of *Tableau-Poème*, a relationship explained by a sketch-book page (fig. 25) including both variants and another design closely approximating *Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue* of 1928 (no. 98). Seuphor dated this page *circa* 1924, but the inclusion of designs which did not appear before 1928 and, in one case, appeared only in 1931, indicates a somewhat later date.

The paradigmatic explanation of content in the sketch-book is basic to Mondrian's work throughout this period. The Dutch inscriptions outline an essential contrast between the two vertical compositions; the one most resembling *Tableau-Poème* is called "tragic" because of the too great length of line *ab* in relation to line *a'b'*. The line *cd* introduced into the second composition, as in *Composition in Red, Black and White* of 1931, is said to relieve this tragic quality to some extent. In a third composition in square format, the lines *ef* and *hg* are "more in balance" with each other, and thus less "tragic". In brackets below Mondrian explains the tragic concept as "suffering through the domination of the one over the other".

A similar concept is found repeatedly in Mondrian's earlier writing, but after 1928, apart from several unusual elongated compositions (S: c.c. 367; and the vertical series, no. 107, S. c.c. 385-87), many paintings have a perfect or nearly perfect square format. In the 1930's and 1940's there are many works in which the height (the masculine element) is somewhat greater than the width (the feminine element), but the inverse relationship virtually disappeared from his production in the 1920's (see no. 96).

Despite the "remedial" effect of the intermediate line introduced in *Composition with Red, Black and White* of 1931, Mondrian in New York referred to it as his "tragic" work to its owner, his close friend Charmion von Wiegand. Perhaps Mondrian was referring partly to the disproportionate vertical format and the heavy black lines, which in 1932 he abandoned by introducing thinner closely spaced double lines (e.g. S: c.c. 368 and 369).

1928/53

Lithograph

25-1/2 x 19-1/2 in. 61.1 x 49.5 cm.

Signed lower right:

Seuphor Paris, 3 décembre 1953

Exhibitions:

Santa Barbara 1965, no. 61

Mr and Mrs Burton Tremaine

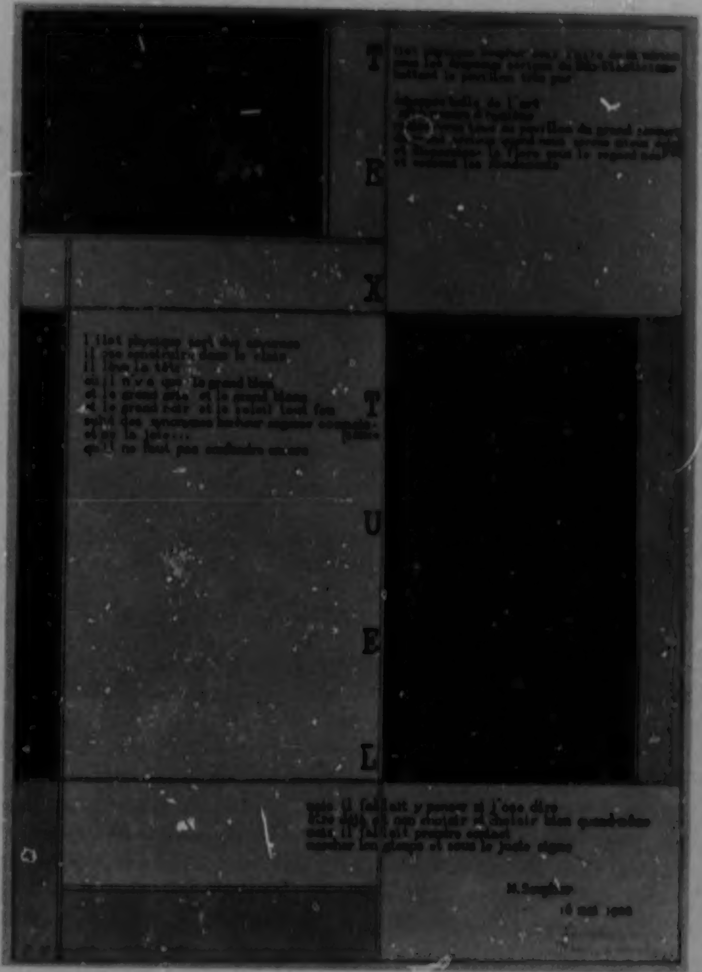
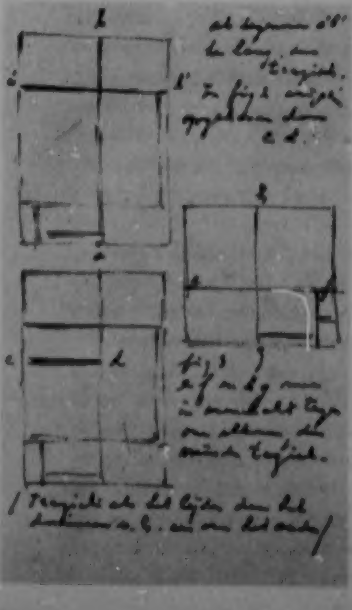


figure 25



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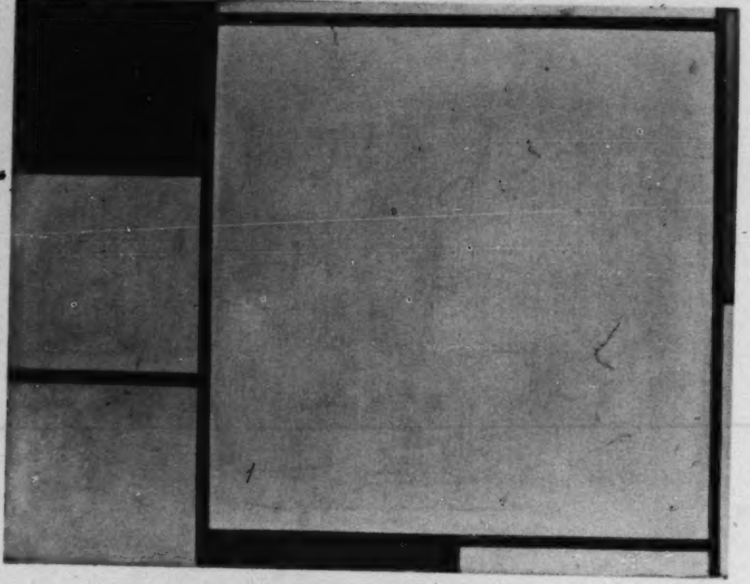


1927

Oil on canvas

15-3/4 x 20-1/2 in., 40 x 52 cm.

Signed lower left: PM '27

Provenance:
acquired from the artist 1928

Exhibitions:
Amsterdam 1946, no. 102;
Amsterdam 1951;
The Hague 1955, no. 110;
Zürich 1955, no. 90;
Venice 1956, no. 17;
Rome 1956-57, no. 41;
Paris 1957, René, no. 16;
Dortmund 1964, no. 8

Jhr M. J. I. de Jonge van Ellemeet

96 Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue

This work is one of three related compositions (e.g. S: c.c. 332?) which Mondrian sold through a Rotterdam circle of artists and intellectuals whose members included the architect J. J. P. Oud and the painter Charley Toorop, the daughter of Jan Toorop. The latter purchased one of the paintings, and the third was acquired by Prof. van Lohuizen of Delft. The composition recalls a group from 1922 (e.g. S: c.c. 325-28), and illustrates Mondrian's lifelong habit of reversion to earlier compositions. The formats of almost all paintings after 1927 are squares (including lozenges) or vertical rectangles. Mondrian's choice of a horizontal format for this work may therefore retain some of the distinction between feminine horizontality and masculine verticality deriving from his earlier naturalistic and transitional periods.

The Swiss architect Alfred Roth, an acquaintance of Mondrian's, visited him *circa* 1928 in Paris and discovered that he sometimes placed his paintings in the sun, presumably so that the white would dry faster, either to take another coat or to be considered finished. More important, Mondrian sometimes burnished the surface in order to suppress the traces of brush-work that reminded him of his naturalistic periods and the personal style from which he wished to escape. The surface of this painting does, in fact, seem to have been rubbed so that the brush marks have been partly eradicated. Although ordered in 1927, the painting was not delivered until 1928, and this delay may have been caused by Mondrian's desire to finish it according to the techniques witnessed by Mr Roth. The delay in delivery raises an important question of whether the dates on Mondrian's abstract works represent the dates of completion or of the original conceptions. Since Mondrian undoubtedly worked upon many of his abstract designs for more than a year, this question is not academic, and further investigation is necessary if a sounder chronology of his stylistic development is to be established.

1927

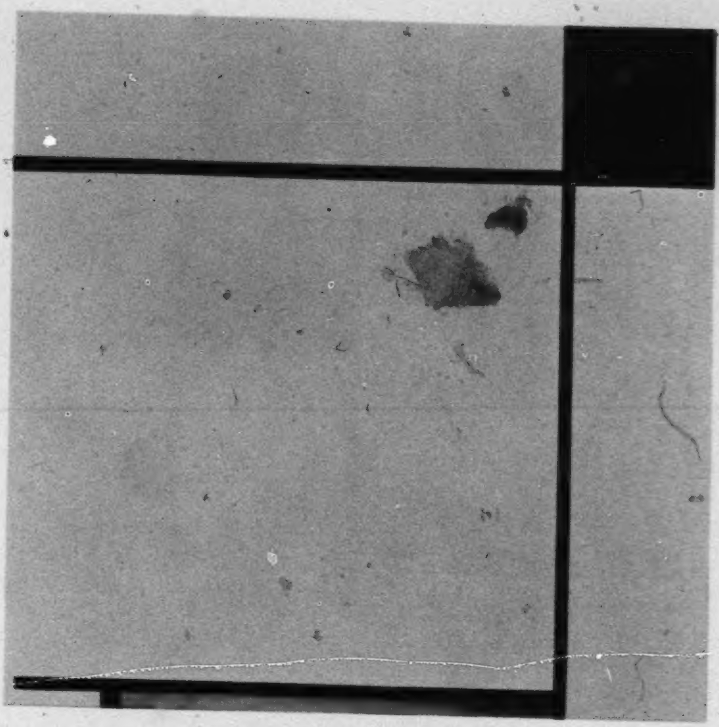
Oil on canvas

22 x 22 in., 56 x 56 cm.

Signed lower right: PM '27

Provenance: acquired from the artist
through J. J. P. Oud by P. E. R. Trousselot,
Katwijk, *circa* 1928;
to present owner 1950

Mr Jon Nicholas Streep



97 Composition with Red and Black

The compositions of this work and many other paintings of the mid 1920's are easily traced back to the more complex structural arrangements of 1922, exemplified by *Composition* in the Rosen collection (no. 93). One trait derived from that earlier period is that the line in the lower left corner is not extended to the edge of the canvas (in fact, it seems to have been scraped off and filled in with white). This had been an aspect of Mondrian's *De Stijl* period paintings (see no. 90) but it rarely if ever occurred after *Composition with Red and Black*. Like most of Mondrian's 1922-27 works (S: c.c. 321-35 and 362-66), this work has a perfectly square format instead of the vertical format of the Rosen canvas. The central square enclosed on all four sides in the earlier compositions (e.g. no. 96) was replaced *circa* 1925-27, as illustrated in this work, by a large square unbounded on one or two sides by internal dividing lines. In several lozenge paintings *circa* 1925-27 an empty square grid is left open on one side or two (e.g. S: c.c. 403, 406 and 407), but only gradually between 1925 and 1929 do rectilinear canvases with the central square left open on one or two sides begin to replace those with a completely enclosed central area. Then they occur so frequently (e.g. several at the Kaiser Wilhelm Museum, Krefeld, Germany dating 1925-26 and S: c.c. 339, 362, 363, 365 and 366) that they can be described as transitional between the compositions with enclosed squares of the early 1920's and the few basic compositional types of 1928-32 (see nos. 98 to 100). The limitation of colour to a single red strip and the severely restricted number of black lines and planes of this work are expressive qualities which anticipate the formidably austere style of 1928-31 (see no. 100).

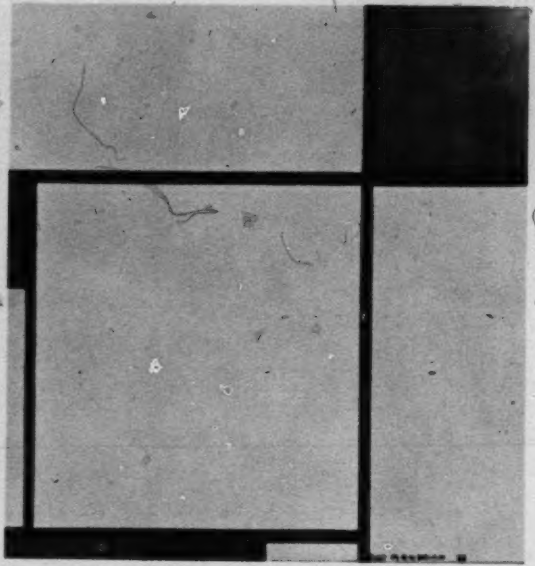


figure 26

1928

Oil on canvas

17-3/4 x 17-3/4 in., 45 x 45 cm.

Signed lower left: PIET MONDRIAN 28

Provenance: ex collection M. Stam, Amsterdam; to present owner *circa* 1964

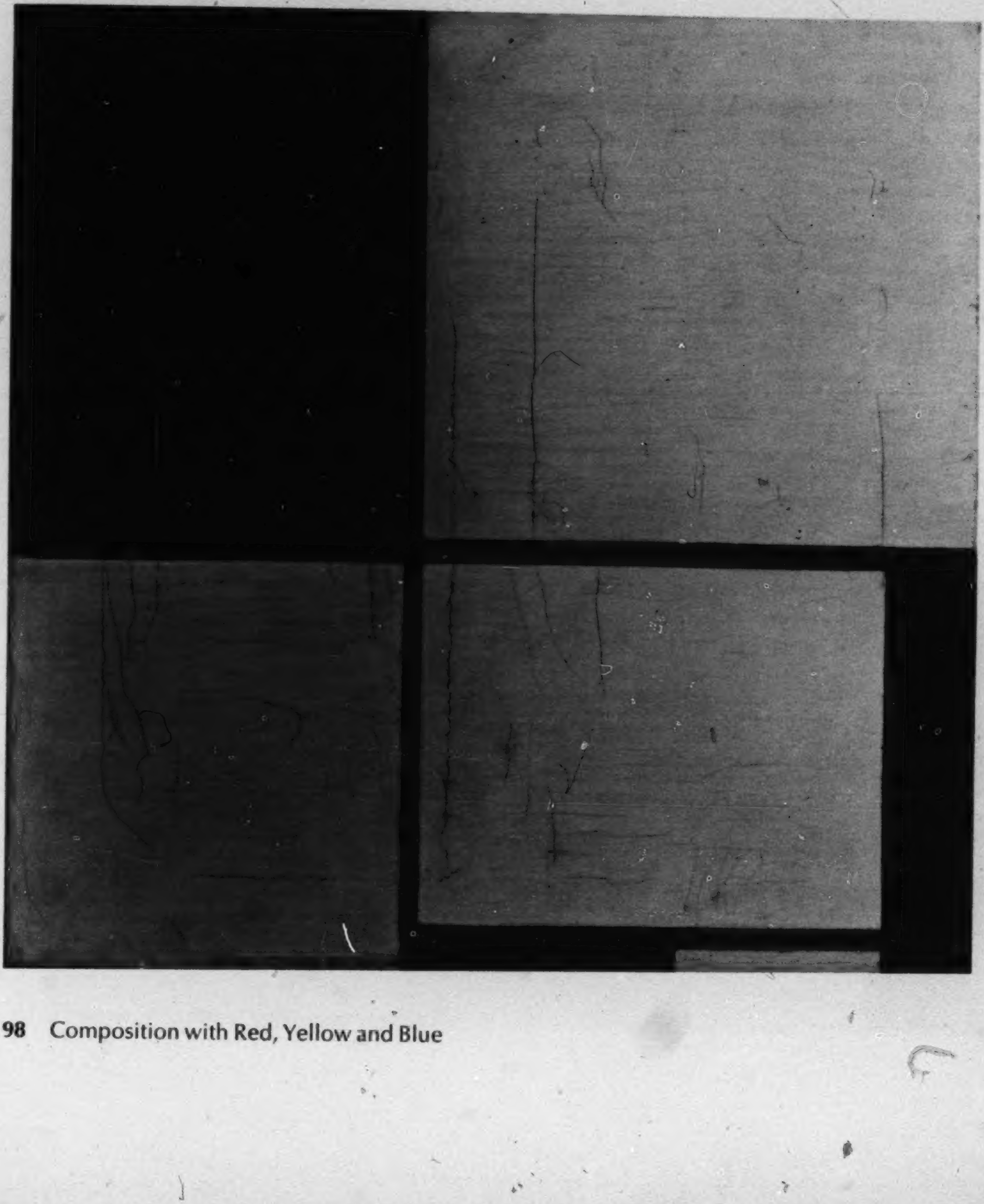
Exhibitions:
Amsterdam 1946, no. 104;
The Hague 1955, no. 114;
Rome 1956-57, no. 43;
Paris 1957, René, no. 18;
Dortmund 1964, no. 9

Wilhelm Hack collection

With the possible exception of two lozenge paintings and a very few others, all of Mondrian's paintings between 1928 and 1932 can be divided into two or three types of composition. Of the two types with a perfect or nearly perfect square format, this work represents that in which the largest of four basic divisions is always at the upper right corner (except for S: c.c. 348); the other type, illustrated by *Composition*, 1929 (no. 99), less strictly permits the largest square to occur in either the upper or lower right corner (see also no. 100 for a variant example).

Despite the apparent lack of preparatory drawings or other data to illustrate Mondrian's compositional evolution more precisely, it is fascinating to speculate upon the possible steps by which he developed this classic image. Perhaps he worked from a 1928 composition (fig. 26) which was still based on a single enclosed square and was transitional between several works of 1927 (e.g. S: c.c. 335) and a single work of 1929 (S: c.c. 337; see also no. 99). Mondrian might have compressed the large area and adjacent strips of the 1928 composition to produce the smaller rectangle of *Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue*, while allowing the previously smallest square to expand. This process corresponds to a structural inversion similar to the traditional methods of musical composition.

Behind precedents from the late 1920's, this work looks back to the more varied and complex structural experiments of *circa* 1921. By eliminating some of the interior lines of *Composition in Grey, Blue, Yellow and Red* (S: c.c. 318), *Composition with Great Blue Plane* (S: c.c. 317) and, after cropping, *Composition with Red, Yellow, Blue and Black* (no. 90), it is not very difficult to derive the fundamental elements of the many versions of this composition (e.g. S: c.c. 345-48 and 353-55). Of course the 1921 works could not have been direct predecessors of the simpler and more uniform compositions of 1928-32. Although Mondrian's evolution progressed haltingly at times, during the decade after 1922 there was a continuous development towards a few classic compositions which culminated in 1932 in the ultimate simplicity of a contrast between single vertical and horizontal lines (S: c.c. 409).



98 Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue

99 Composition

Except for a little-known 1922 prototype in the Oud collection, the type of composition used in this work occurs exclusively in several paintings from 1929 or 1930 using a square format with the side dimensions varying only from 17 to 20 inches. The basic composition comprises a large interior square or near-square flanked on two adjacent sides by rows of smaller rectangular divisions whose width varies between 1/4 and 1/3 of the side dimensions (e.g. S: c.c. 341-44 and 349-52). This type of composition appears to have evolved from many works produced from 1922 to *circa* 1929, in which a large central area is enclosed on three or four sides by marginal areas or strips. Its immediate predecessor may have been *Fox-Trot B* (S: c.c. 337; compare also fig. 26), from which the two narrower margins at bottom and right are deleted. At least two important works of 1921 (S: c.c. 317 and 318) seem to include the basic elements necessary for the evolution of this easily identifiable series of paintings.

Some members of the series, like this work, include only one primary colour, but Mondrian apparently felt free to decide the question without following a dogmatic system. In one instance, in fact, he left the choice of colours to Alfred Roth, who had commissioned a version of this composition (S: c.c. 349), and was quite satisfied to hear a preference for all three primaries expressed.

1929

Oil on canvas

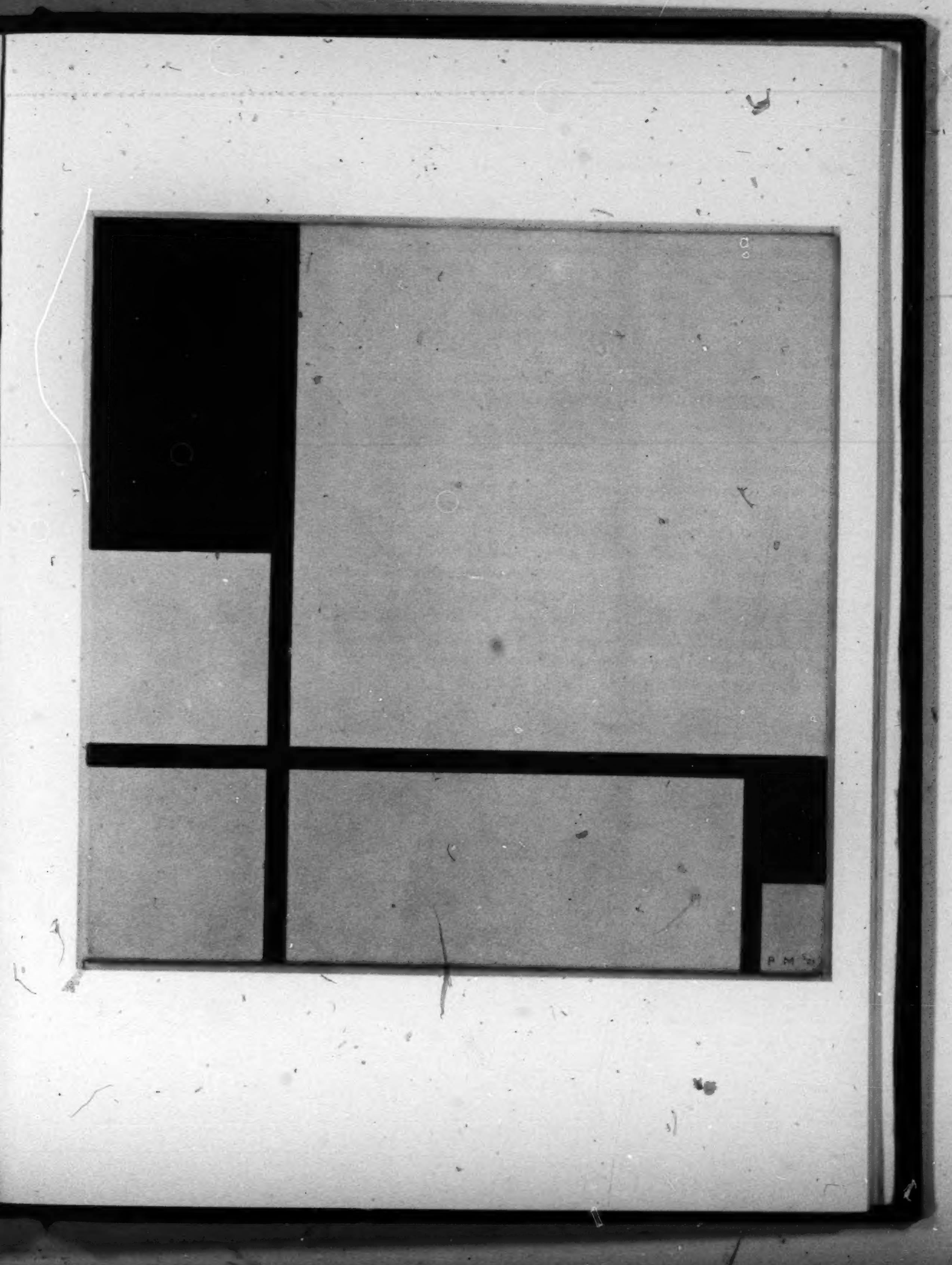
20-1/2 x 20-1/2 in., 52 x 52 cm.

Signed lower right: PM '29

Provenance: ex Dutch private collection
to Mrs Trix Dürst-Haass, Basel;
to prevent owner summer 1954

Exhibitions: Zürich 1955, no. 95

Marguerite Arp


P M '21

100 Composition 2 with Black Lines

This severe composition and a companion piece (S: c.c. 359) come close to eliminating all pictorial elements but one vertical and one horizontal black line on a white ground. Only in the lozenge *Composition with Two Lines* of 1931 (S: ill. p. 287 and c.c. 409) did the artist risk the kind of ultimate solution that Malevich had arrived at with his *Suprematist Composition: White on White* more than a decade earlier.

The composition of this work is based on a cruciform theme which first occurred in 1925 (S: c.c. 338), but became common only during the two or three years immediately following 1930 (e.g. S: c.c. 356-59) and reappeared in increasingly complex variations following the introduction of the double line (e.g. S: c.c. 369, see also no. 105). Because of its nearly square format, this painting may also be considered a structurally purified variation on the 1929-30 series of compositions (e.g. no. 99), especially when, as in other examples (e.g. S: c.c. 342), this composition is turned upside down. Indeed, by 1930 Mondrian had reduced his compositional types to a minimal number, probably three at the most (see nos. 98 and 99). Although the strikingly heavy black lines of this work contain some of the "tragic" overtones of other related works (see no. 95), the simplicity and purity of design must nonetheless have contained the artist's most advanced ideas of style and content at that date.

1930

Oil on canvas

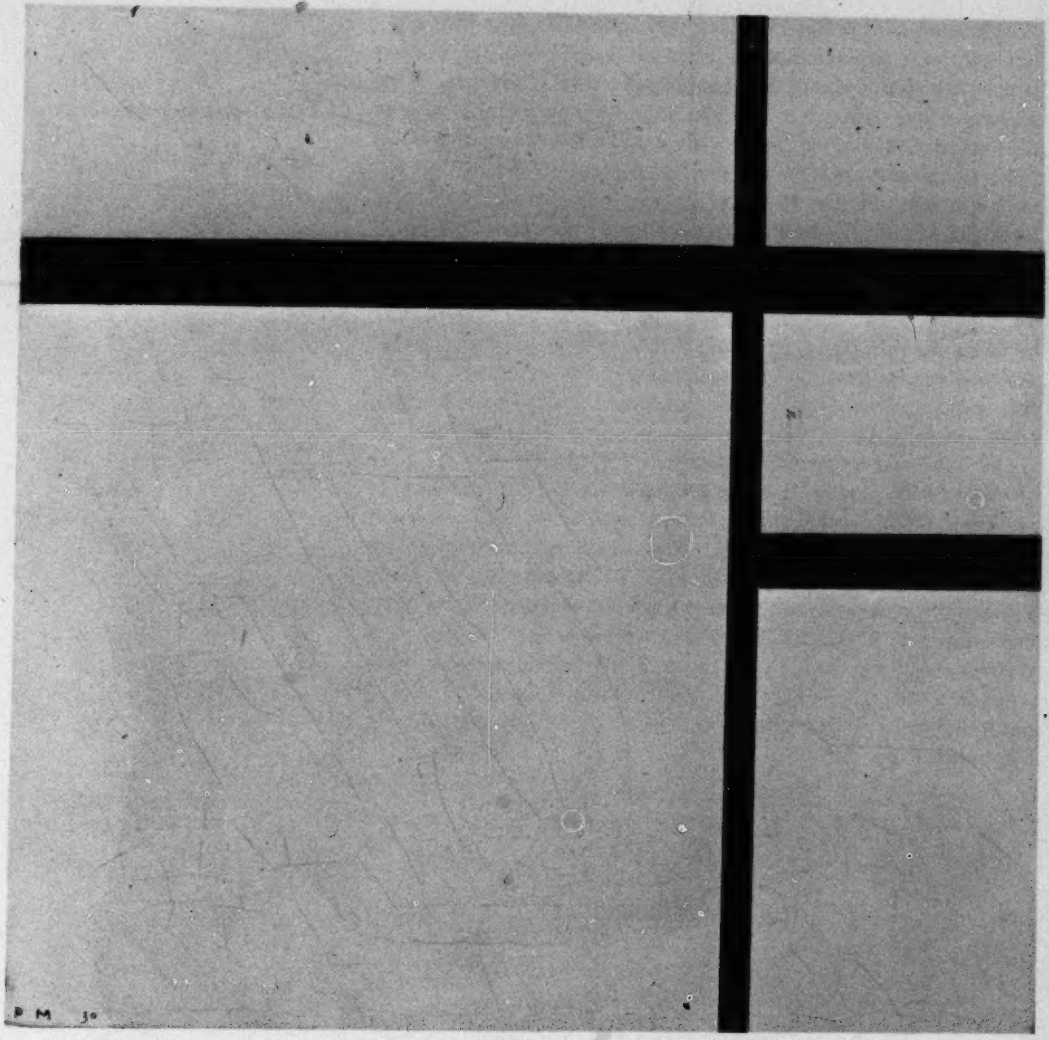
19-11/16 x 20-1/8 in., 50 x 51 cm.

Signed lower left: PM 30

Provenance: acquired from the artist
by A. P. van den Briel;
to present owner by 1955

Exhibitions: Basel 1947, no. 15;
The Hague 1955, no. 119;
New York 1964, Marlborough, no. 21

Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven



PM 30

101 Composition with Yellow Lines

1933

Oil on canvas

Diagonal dimension: 44-1/2 in., 113 cm.

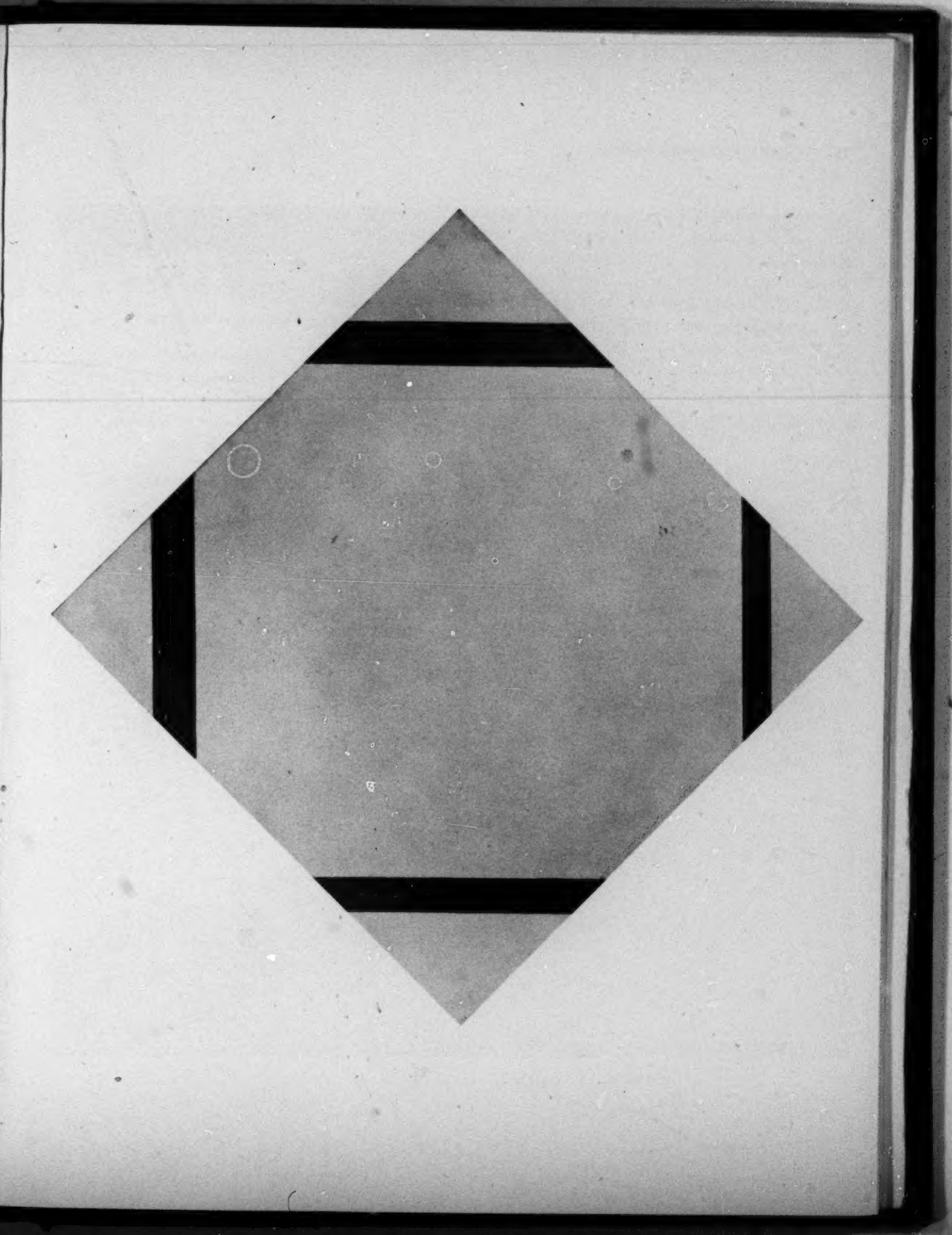
Signed lower left: PM 33
(on yellow bar)

Provenance and exhibitions: see GM: 155

Gemeentemuseum, The Hague

Composition with Yellow Lines uniquely anticipates *New York City I* (no. 110) in its replacing of the usual black lines with the primary yellow. The disposition of the lines is more radical than in any of the preceding lozenges (S: c.c. 405 and 408), since in it alone none of the lines meet within the canvas. This supports the theory of Max Bill (*"Die Komposition I/1925 von Piet Mondrian"* pamphlet reprinted from the *Jahresbericht 1956 der Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft*), who feels that Mondrian's lozenge compositions imply an extension of the painting into the surrounding space; in *Composition with Yellow Lines*, it is impossible for the viewer not to think of the four lines meeting at points outside the painting. Moreover, the distance between the outside edges of the vertical lines is greater than the diagonal dimension of the canvas, and the distance between the outside edges of the horizontal lines is equal to the diagonal dimension, so that Mondrian has dared here to imply a second picture space of greater area than the actual painting.

Nonetheless, in this and all subsequent paintings, the relative proportions and resulting colour and structural tensions were conceived in relation to the size and shape of the picture format. The implied movement beyond the limits of the canvas was very likely a secondary phenomenon like the *trompe-l'oeil* optical flickering at line intersections, which after 1932 again becomes common. Mondrian's friends attest that he was aware of the implications of all such secondary phenomena, but they also uniformly insist that it was never his primary purpose to create them; significantly, they are not mentioned in his published writings.



102 Composition with Yellow

Together with two unfinished composition paintings, *Composition with Yellow* provides a valuable insight into Mondrian's use of the double line *circa* 1935, three years after its introduction (S: c.c. 368). *Composition with Blue* (reproduced on its side? S. c.c. 428, also ill. Basel 1964-65, no. 58) and a third closely related version, an unfinished *Composition* (reproduced upside down? S: c.c. 429), were almost certainly intended to be seen as upright cruciform images, like several variations on essentially the same theme (e.g. nos. 100 and 105). Although *Composition with Blue* and the unfinished *Composition* have been attributed by Seuphor to 1938, a more plausible date would be 1935, the date given to *Composition with Yellow* by the artist.

In *Composition with Yellow* the two horizontal lines are close enough together to be seen as a variant of a cruciform composition dated 1933 (S: c.c. 369). In the other versions the lines are set wider apart; the faint *pentimento* of an earlier line on *Composition with Blue* suggets that this could have been an abandonment of the strict double-line concept. As in most of the cruciform compositions, the horizontal lines are somewhat thicker than the vertical one. However, the difference here is very slight, being less than one-eighth of an inch. As in many works from 1935 and 1936 which were not altered in New York (e.g. S: c.c. 380, 385, 388 and 389), the thin lines can be considered characteristic of this period.

The stretcher of *Composition with Yellow* bears Mondrian's Paris address, 26 rue du Départ, and an exhibition title *Composition A.*

1935

Oil on canvas

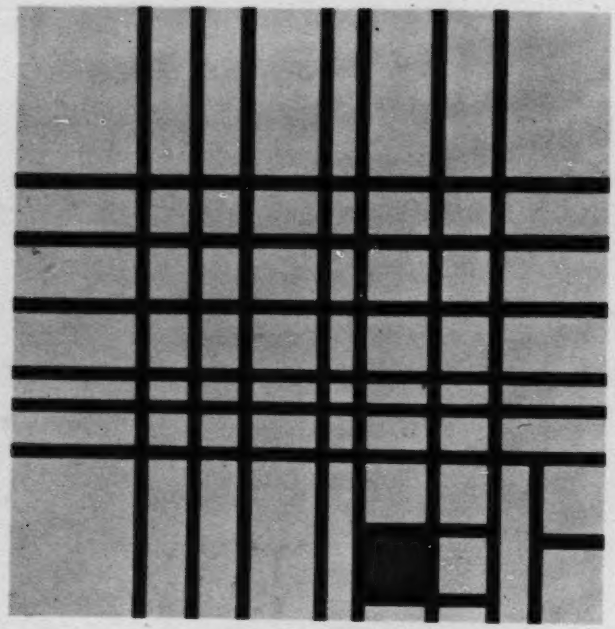
23 x 21-3/4 in., 58.3 x 55.2 cm.

Signed lower right: PM 35

Provenance: Mondrian estate to
Harry Holtzman;
John Senior Jr to
Sidney Janis Gallery; to present
owner 5 January 1959

Exhibitions: Basel 1964-65, no. 52

Gallery Beyeler



1936

Oil on canvas

28-3/4 x 26 in., 73 x 66 cm.

Signed lower right: PM 36

Provenance: Walter C. Arensberg,
Hollywood; to present owner 1950

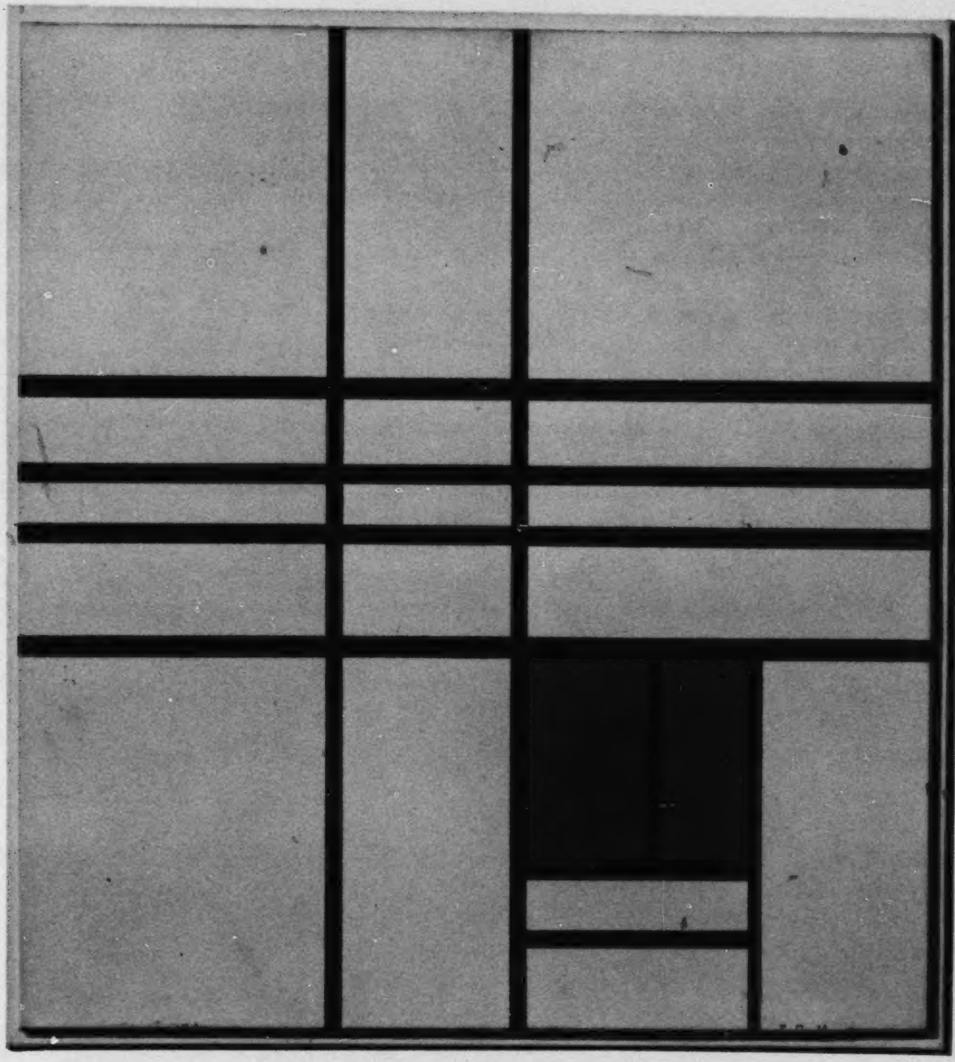
Philadelphia Museum of Art,
The Louise and Walter Arensberg
Collection

→

figure 27

103 Composition with Yellow Square

The compositional predecessor of the delicate balance of multiple thin lines and the single bisected square of pure lemon yellow found in this work is the pivotal double-line *Composition B with Grey and Yellow* of 1932 (S: c.c. 368), which itself was a refinement of a compositional type common from 1928 to 1932 (e.g. no. 98). Between 1932 and 1936, Mondrian executed a number of further variations on this theme (S: ill. p. 290 and c.c. 370, 374, 375, 379, 380 and 389 and several unfinished versions, e.g. S: c.c. 426 and New York 1962, nos. 18 and 24). Although the inclusion of double or multiple lines in all these examples does not obscure their basic compositional identity, by 1936 the component divisions have become so complex that it is difficult to isolate the line of descent of an individual structural theme. But the essential features of a more or less symmetrical Greek cross and the small square in a lower corner seem to have survived even the move to New York in 1940, since they are still discoverable in *Composition 2 with Blue* (fig. 27) which, although begun in 1936, was given its definitive form as late as 1942.



104 Composition with Red

This work and several others bearing trustworthy dates of 1936 can scarcely have been derived directly from the few structural archetypes which had dominated Mondrian's art between 1922 and 1935. In a limited sense, *Composition with Red* does expand outwards from the Greek cross pattern of, for example, *Composition with Yellow Square* (no. 103), and could be considered transitional towards *Composition with Red and Yellow* (no. 106) of 1938. But it is no more direct a link than several other works of 1936 (e.g. S: c.c. 376-78), to which it is related in general structure. About 1936 the black lines begin to multiply, and they no longer function primarily as either dividing or containing elements, but perform both functions simultaneously. Such purposeful ambiguities of formal arrangement are to be found increasingly in Mondrian's art during the last decade of his life.

1936

Oil on canvas

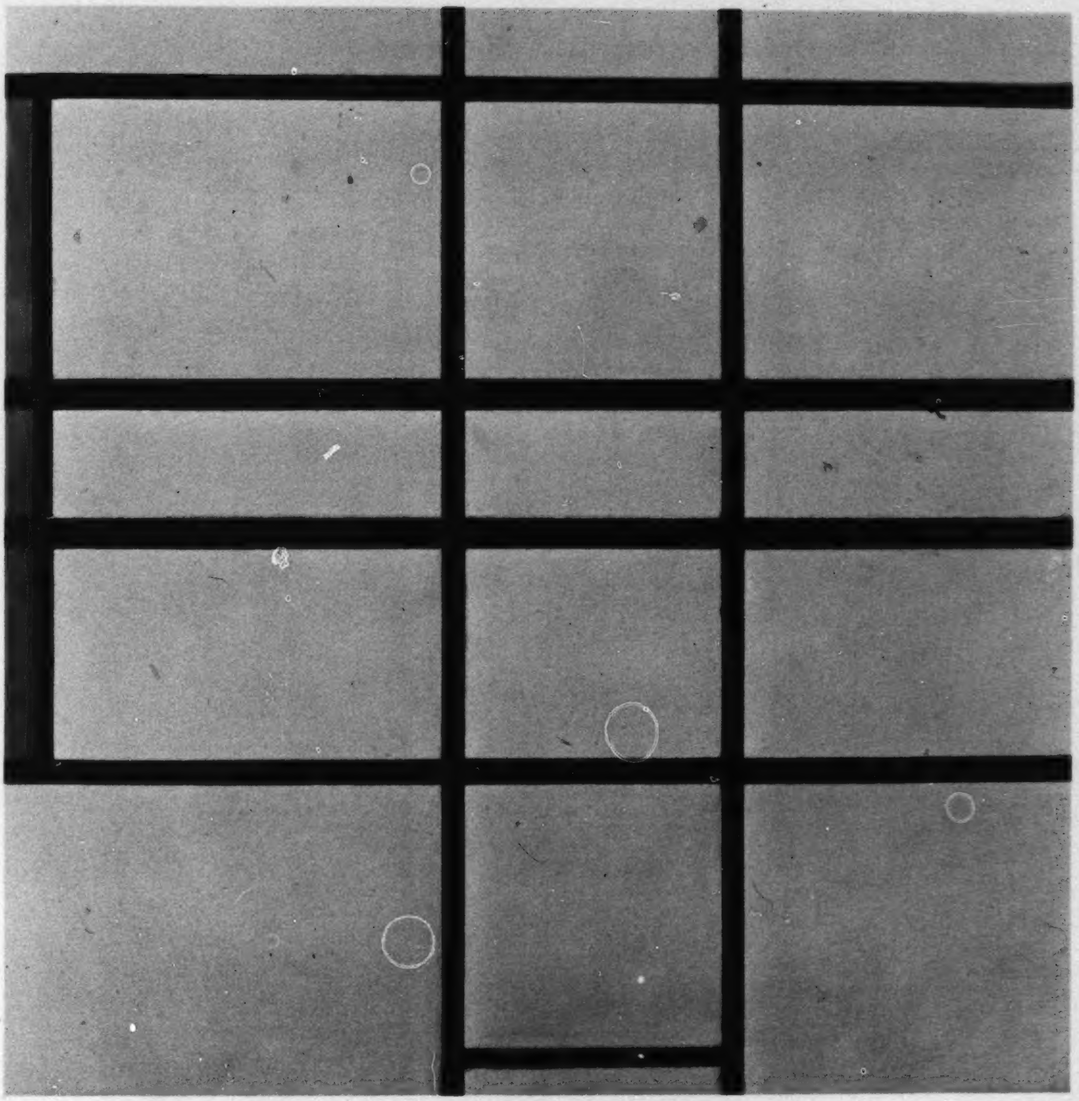
20 x 19-7/8 in., 50.7 x 50.4 cm.

Signed lower centre: PM 36

Provenance: A. E. Gallatin, New York;
to present owner 1952

Exhibitions: New York 1940, no. 96

Philadelphia Museum of Art,
A. E. Gallatin Collection



105 Composition with Blue and Yellow

This painting and a companion piece (S: c.c. 390) are densely structured variants of the cruciform theme (see nos. 100 and 102). The most immediate antecedents are works of 1936 (S: c.c. 372 and 373) and a trio of interrelated paintings *circa* 1935 (see no. 102). The multiplication of lines to three verticals and three horizontals is characteristic of the development after 1936 and throughout the rest of Mondrian's career. Although in the years following 1938 the cruciform image is gradually replaced by more complex amalgamations of structural motifs, an interesting variation of the theme is found in *Composition No. 7* (S: c.c. 414) dated 1937/42. The comparison of these two works (see also S: c.c. 390) illustrates how Mondrian modified even a relatively dense structure like that of *Composition with Blue and Yellow* by adding unbounded colour planes and intermediate lines after he had moved to New York (see nos. 107 and 108).

1937

Oil on canvas

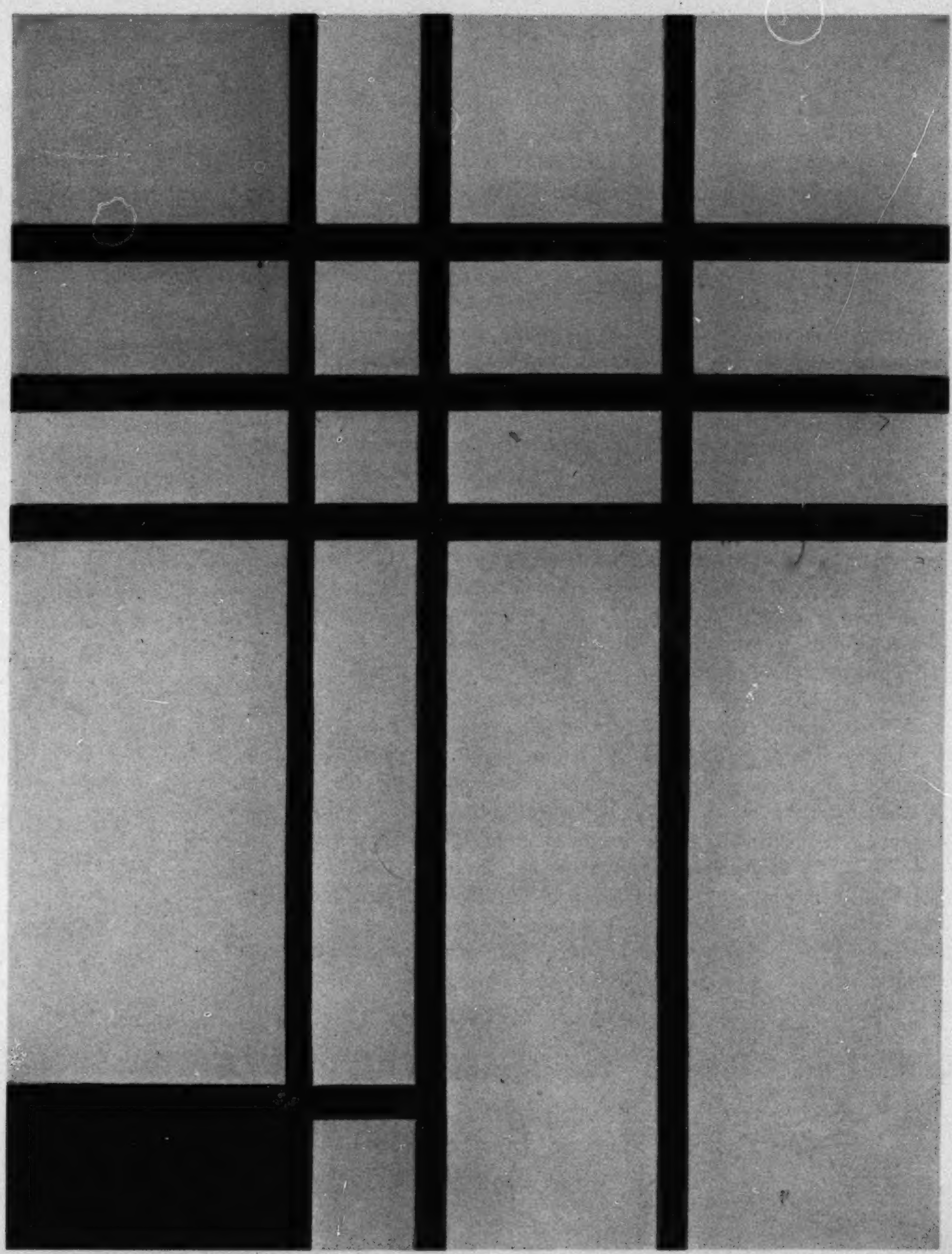
22 x 17-3/4 in., 55.8 x 45 cm.

Signed lower right: PM
Dated lower left: 37

Provenance:
ex collection César Domela;
to Sidney Janis Gallery 1951;
to Norman Laskey collection 1954;
to present owner 1960

Exhibitions: New York 1962, no. 20;
New York 1963, no. 30

Sidney Janis Gallery



106 Composition with Red and Yellow

This composition is virtually the only work dated 1938 with no "42" or "43" added to indicate it was worked on again in New York. The composition is unusually symmetrical. The only asymmetrical elements, the off-centre areas of colour in the upper left and at the right edge, add a necessary tension to an otherwise relatively static composition.

One could consider this a variation of *Composition with Yellow Square* (no. 103), in which the two vertical lines and the tiers of horizontal lines have been moved from the centre towards the picture edges, producing a sense of enclosed form in contrast to the radiating arms of a Greek cross in the earlier work. One might also imagine Mondrian beginning with a version of the cruciform theme (e.g. no. 102) to which he added an identical but inverted image, to produce the more classic proportion and balance typical of his art towards the end of the 1930's. This type of analysis cannot, of course, disclose to what extent, if at all, Mondrian himself thought in terms of transforming, inverting and combining elements of earlier compositional ideas. However, such manners of thought were not foreign to him at any period, and in this instance the inversion of compositional elements is reminiscent of the many images of buildings or trees mirrored in foreground water (e.g. nos. 20 and 28) during the naturalistic period.

The soft, evenly applied brush strokes retain traces of grain which will become more emphatic and less uniform in direction in such late works as *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (no. 112) and *Victory Boogie Woogie* (S: ill. p. 191, c.c. 425). For all these qualities of restraint, balance and decorum, one may describe *Composition with Red and Yellow* as one of the last completed works in which Mondrian's standards of style and taste remain oriented to Europe, and more specifically, to France. Shortly afterwards he was affected by the jangling and irregular rhythms of American culture and began to feel the more direct impact of American jazz music.

1938

Oil on canvas

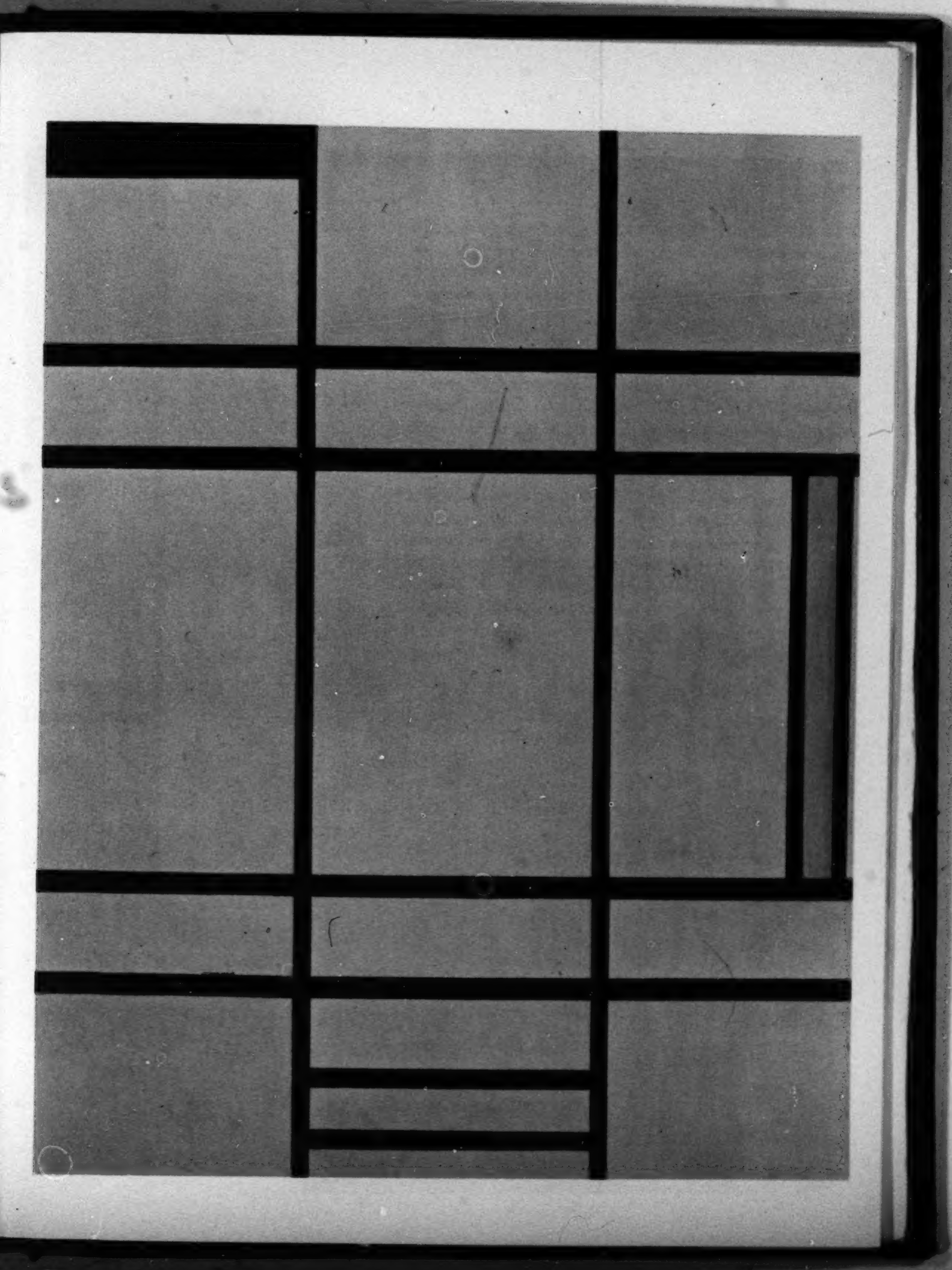
31-1/2 x 24-1/2 in., 80 x 62.2 cm.

Signed lower centre: PM 38

Provenance: Mondrian estate to Harry Holtzman; Sidney Janis Gallery; G. David Thompson collection; Gallery Beyeler; Paul Kantor Gallery, Los Angeles; to present owner 1963

Exhibitions:
New York 1953, no. 35;
The Hague 1954, no. 126;
Zürich 1955, no. 113;
London 1955, no. 51;
New York 1957, no. 22;
New York 1960, no. 32;
Basel 1964-65, no. 57;
Santa Barbara 1965, no. 67

Los Angeles County Museum of Art,
The Mr and Mrs William
Preston Harrison Collection



107 Composition with Red, Yellow and Blue

This painting was begun in 1935 as one of three works in a vertical format. This and another version (S: c.c. 386) were finished only in 1942 in New York, when Mondrian added the small unbounded blocks of colour and probably several horizontal lines. Perhaps the lines were made somewhat thicker then, further distorting the extremely bare compositional structure evident in a third version completed and signed in 1936 (fig. 28). In these three works the heights virtually double the widths, and the dominance of the vertical dimension is further emphasized by the characteristic pair of unconnected vertical lines.

As in *Composition with Yellow Lines* (no. 101), but here using other means, Mondrian implies an extension of the structure beyond the edge of the canvas, although the composition within the painting remains paramount and entirely balanced. The New York modifications tend to counterbalance the movement implied by the vertical column, but Mondrian does not compromise the essentially masculine or spiritual orientation of this impressive image.

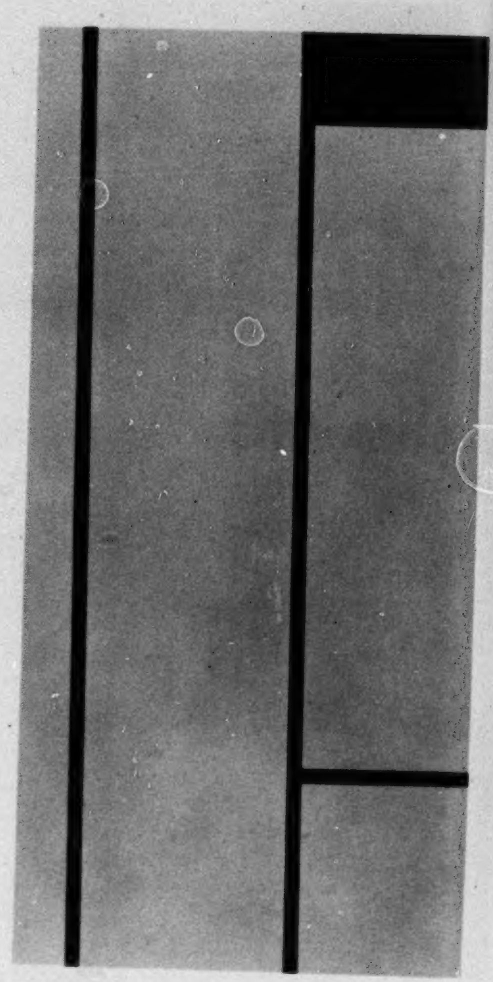


figure 28

1935/42

Oil on canvas

39-1/4 x 20-1/4 in., 99.6 x 51.3 cm.

Signed lower right centre: PM
Dated lower left: 35/42

Provenance:
Mondrian estate to Harry Holtzman;
to Sidney Janis Gallery;
to present owner *circa* 1963

Exhibitions: New York 1951, no. 30;
New York 1957, no. 23;
New York 1960, no. 31;
New York 1962, no. 17;
New York 1963, no. 31;
Santa Barbara 1965, no. 64;
Dallas 1965, no. 63

Mr and Mrs James H. Clark

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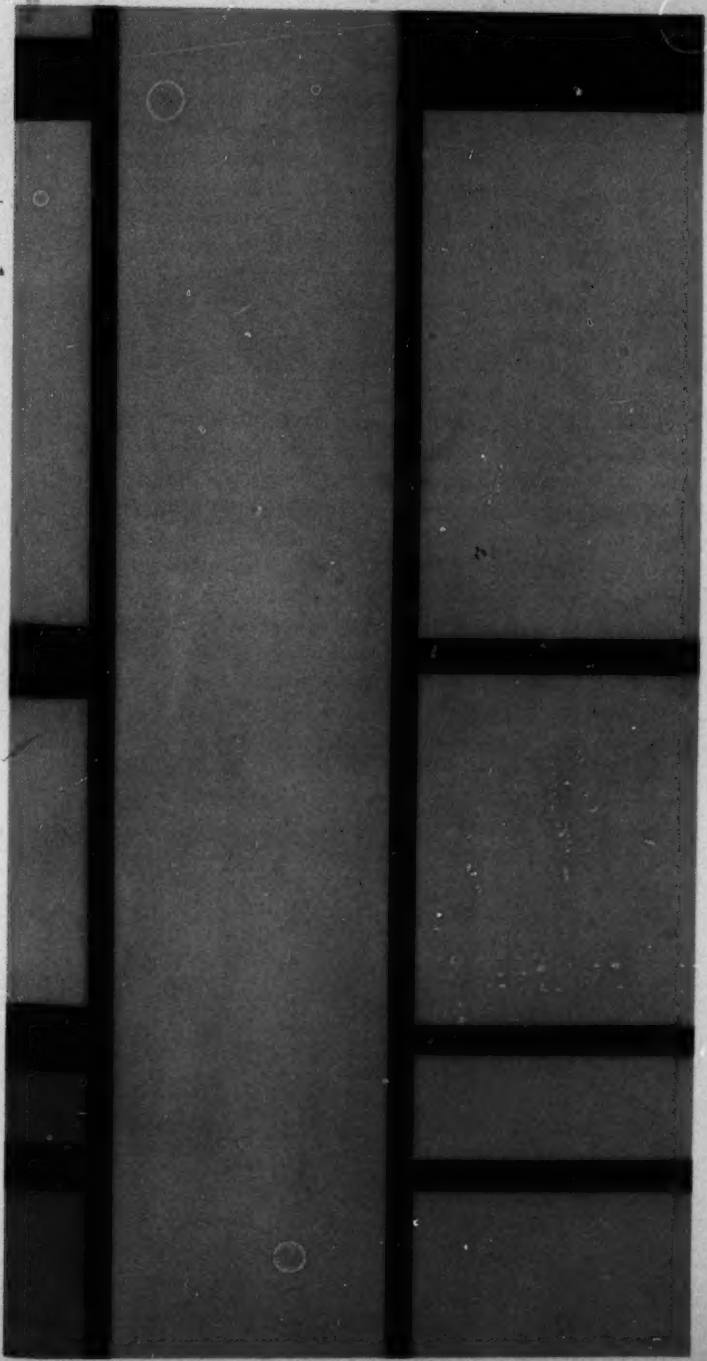


108 Composition London

The apparently unique date, 1940/42, permits us to identify this painting as no. 11 in Mondrian's first exhibition in New York, where that date is used as a title. "London" was added to the title in 1945 by James Johnson Sweeney for the Mondrian retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art because Mondrian had said that the painting was begun during the blitz in London. This title is clearly an afterthought and was never meant to imply an inspiration from a specific topography.

The composition can be considered transitional between the works of the late 1930's in Paris and those done in New York, although Mondrian did alter the work in New York, at least adding the unbounded colour squares at the left. It is also related to several canvases left unfinished at Mondrian's death (e.g. S: c.c. 432 and 434) in the concentration of vertical lines on the right of the canvas leaving the left more or less open. The asymmetric balance of the colour area at the lower right corner is preserved in several New York works (e.g. no. 109). This general composition also occurs in several sketches (e.g. fig. 29) which were probably executed in London. One sketch subdivides the canvas horizontally into three sections, and that illustrated doubles the lower intermediate line, forming a strip which widens somewhat in the oil painting, making the horizontal division of the canvas more truly quadrapartite. This multiplying of lines, resulting in a greater density and more evenly distributed grid divisions, is characteristic of Mondrian's New York production, but had already reached an advanced stage of development in London, as this work and its related drawings show.

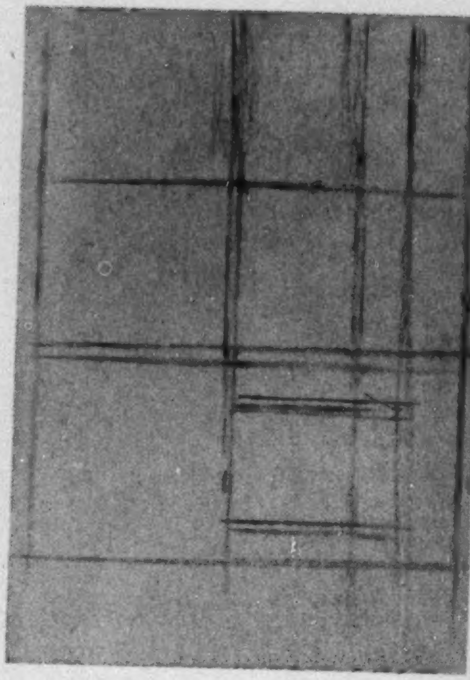


figure 29

1940/42

Oil on canvas

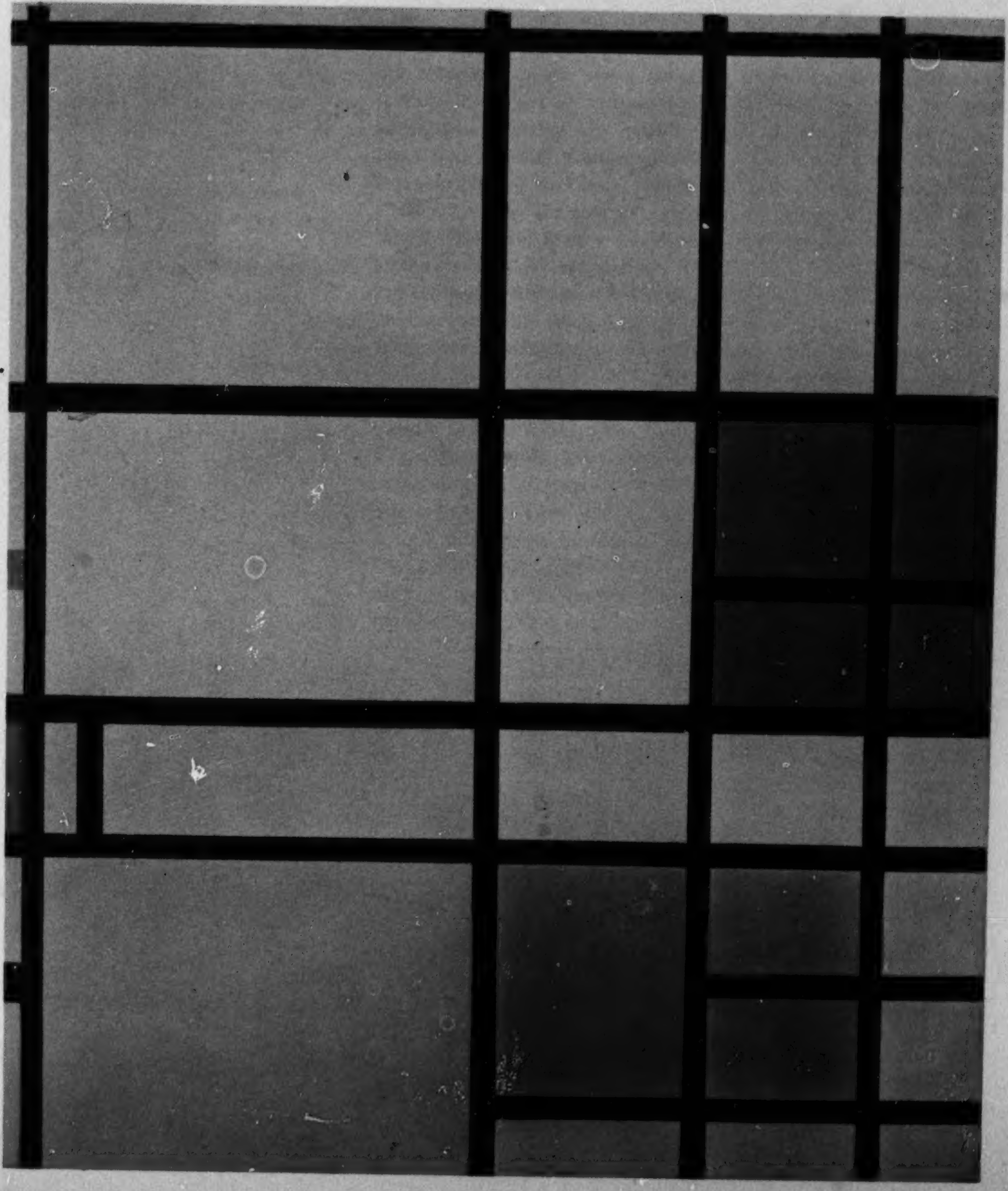
32-1/2 x 28 in., 82.5 x 71 cm.

Signed lower left: PM
Dated lower right: 40/42

Provenance: ex Valentine Gallery;
to Mrs Harold Florsheim, Chicago;
to present owner 18 May 1944

Exhibitions:
New York 1942(?), no. 11;
New York 1945, no. 46;
Washington 1965, no. 53

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo



109 New York City No. 5

Among four large unfinished compositions (the others are S: c.c. 435, 436 and one in the Holtzman collection) relating to *New York City I* (no. 110), this variant is the only one which now lacks the strips of coloured paper that Mondrian used to work out his final design. Tack holes along the edge indicate that such strips had once been tentatively attached, although their number and placement and the visible alterations of charcoal lines indicate that Mondrian's design was by no means finished when he stopped working on it. It is especially remarkable that it displays the structural balance and sensitivity to scale relations which characterize his finished works. This work should not be considered a tentative sketch, and its compositional resemblance to other paintings (e.g. no. 108) is as striking as its probable derivation from one or two unpublished sketch-book drawings (Holtzman collection).

An indication for red, *R*, in one of the squares in the lower right and the crosses in the upper left indicating colour suggest a more positive relation to earlier versions of the same composition (e.g. S: c.c. 431). In picture format, method of execution and composition, this work may be considered a member of the *New York City* group. But the planned inclusion of large squares of colour and several segmented or interrupted lines are not found in *New York City I*. This example may therefore be considered earlier in conception than the completed version and most of the other versions with paper strips.

1941-42

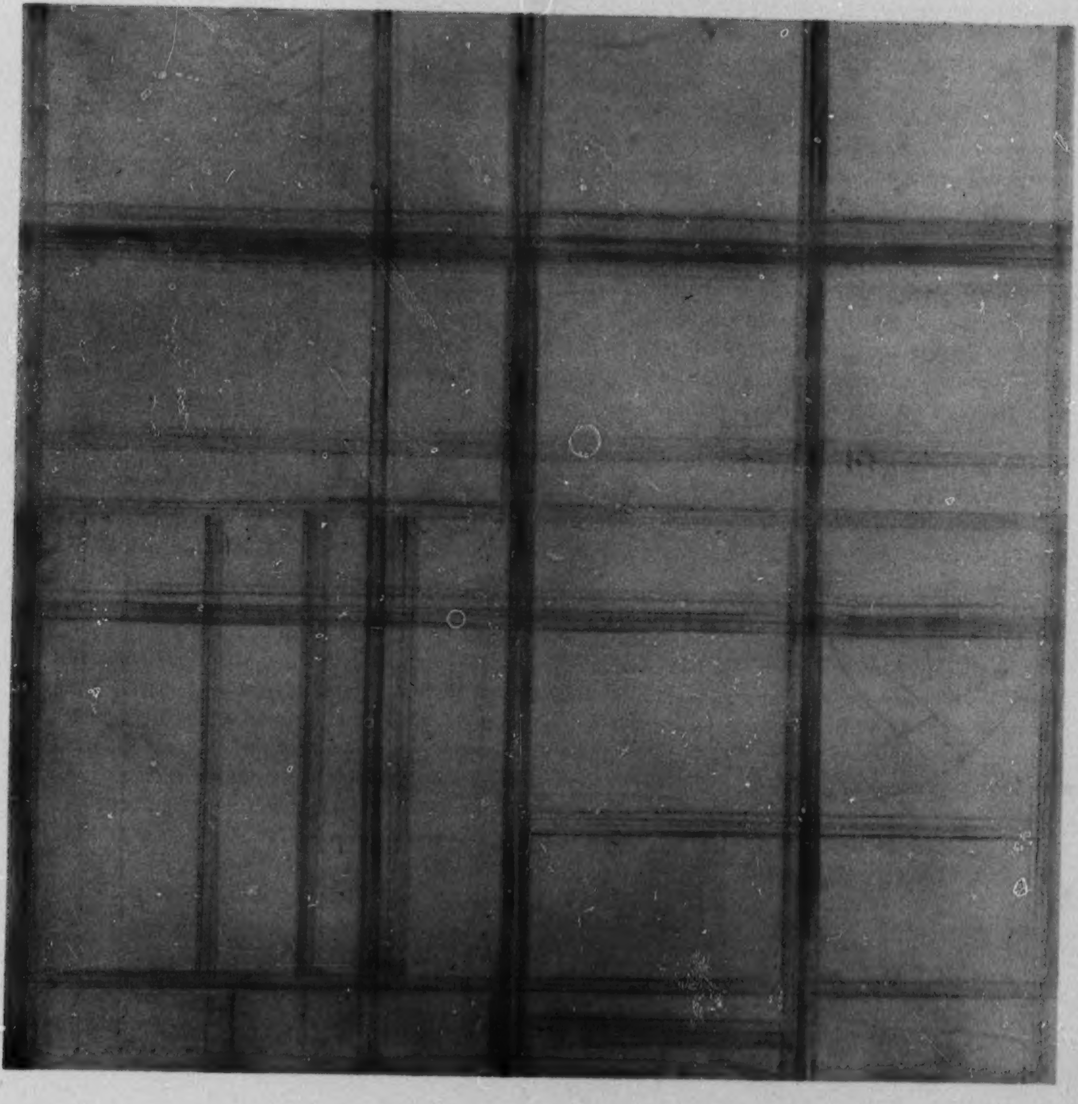
Charcoal on canvas

45-1/4 x 45-1/4 in., 102.2 x 102.2 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: with Mondrian estate
to Harry Holtzman

Mr Harry Holtzman



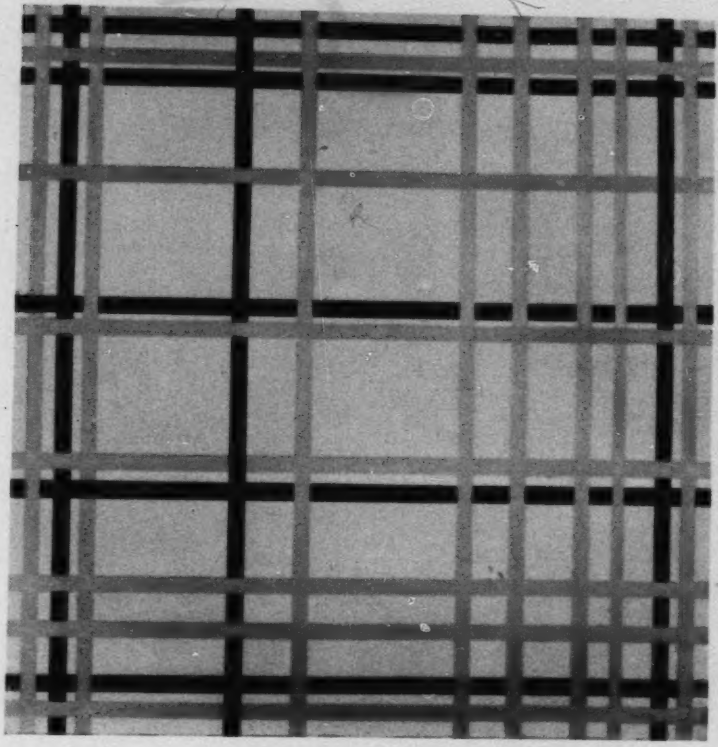
110 New York City I

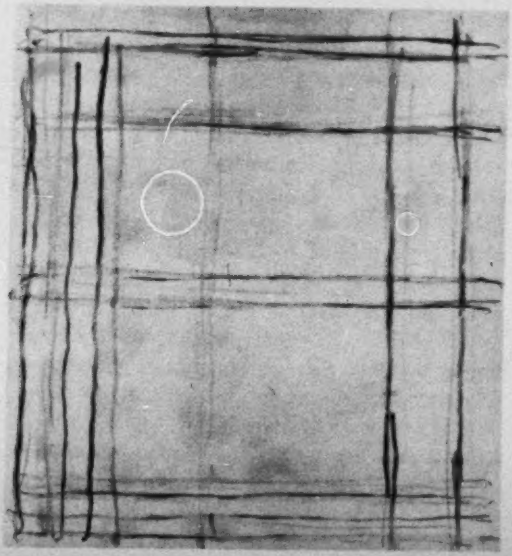
This painting was completed in time for Mondrian's first New York exhibition early in 1942 at the Valentine Gallery. The exclusion of black, the disposition of lines and the new colour intensity due to the juxtaposition of primaries relate this work to *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (no. 112) and to many works of the late 1930's which were finished in New York. The compositional structure of this painting and four other unfinished versions (no. 109, S: c.c. 435 and 436 and an unpublished work in the Holtzman collection) was not directly based on the steel and concrete environment of New York, but was derived from earlier works.

Although this is the only finished version of this theme, one should not assume that it was the earliest in conception. It includes more lines than all but *New York City II* (S: c.c. 435), and the multiplication of vertical divisions, leaving only two relatively open vertical shafts, brings it closer than the other versions to *Broadway Boogie Woogie*. The implied enclosing of a central open area by structurally reinforced lines concentrated along the four edges of the canvas (see also fig. 30) recalls several densely organized works begun in the late 1930's in Europe and finished in New York (e.g. S: c.c. 396, 397, 415, 419 and even 420, its eponymous predecessor *New York*). Nonetheless, it is quite unique in its exclusion of both black and grey, the latter of which reappears in *Broadway Boogie Woogie* and *Victory Boogie Woogie* (S: ill. p. 191 and c.c. 425).

In *New York City I* Mondrian begins with a basic yellow grid which, despite the interweaving of many lines, seems to exist behind the more aggressive bands of blue or red. Seuphor (p. 405) correctly considers that the interweaving effect of the lines reflects Mondrian's use of thin strips of paper to work out the composition. The slight flicker effect of the colour juxtapositions where the lines cross, whether accidental or sought for, is an archaism going back to the grid compositions of 1918-19 and adumbrates the spots of colour rhythmically scattered along the lines of *Broadway Boogie Woogie*.

The title of this work, even if an afterthought, suggests an analogy with New York's grid plan of streets or the rows of vertical and horizontal architectural features on its skyscraper façades. The interweaving lines of the grid may also be seen as a visual metaphor of the elevated and subterranean passages of the New York subway system. Mondrian then lived not far from the Third Avenue "El" and the Lexington Avenue subway line. Certainly, New York's twentieth-century flat-façade architecture, which Mondrian had helped to bring into existence with his painting and which to him signified the arrival of a new and better human environment, had come to seem more congenial to him than the architecture of Paris or London.





1941-42

Oil on canvas

47 x 45 in., 119.3 x 114.2 cm.

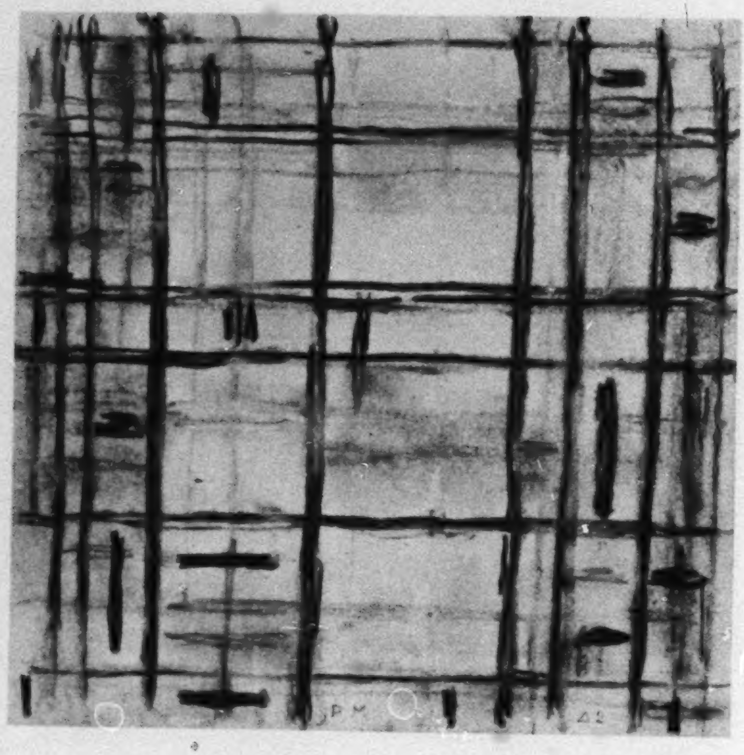
Signed lower left: PM
Dated lower right: 42

Provenance: with Mondrian estate to Harry Holtzman; to present owner 1958

Exhibitions: New York 1942, no. 2(?); New York 1943(?); New York 1945, no. 47; New York 1946, no. 2; Amsterdam 1946, no. 120; Basel 1947, no. 3; New York 1949, no. 27; New York 1951, no. 33; New York 1953, no. 37; The Hague 1955, no. 129; Zürich 1955, no. 117; London 1955, no. 55; Venice 1956, no. 25; Rome 1956-57, no. 52; New York 1957, no. 31; New York 1960, no. 37; New York 1962, no. 27; New York 1963, no. 35

Sidney Janis Gallery

figure 30



111a

Study I for Broadway Boogie Woogie

1942

Charcoal on paper

9 x 9 in.; 22.8 x 22.8 cm.

Signed lower centre: PM
Dated lower right: 42

Provenance: given to the present owner by the artist 1942

Exhibitions: Santa Barbara 1965, no. 70; Dallas 1965(?); Washington 1965, no. 54

Mr and Mrs Arnold Newman

These two drawings were given May 1942 to Arnold Newman, the American photographer, who had met Mondrian somewhat earlier in New York. When he saw and expressed interest in the less finished sketch (no. 111a), Mondrian told him to return later after he had completed a second drawing (no. 111b) of the same composition, which he was thinking of using for a large painting. At that time there was apparently no thought of naming the work *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (no. 112), although the title *Boogie Woogie* had already been given to no. 2 in the January-February Valentine Gallery exhibition of 1942. Only when the two open vertical shafts of the drawings are shifted slightly to the right does their structural relation appear considerably closer to *Broadway Boogie Woogie* than to *New York City I* (no. 110). Such inversions and repetitions of structural motifs, which are in keeping with Mondrian's practice throughout most of his career, are analogous to the characteristic repetition and variation of rhythmic patterns in the boogie woogie music he so admired.

Other related drawings (Holtzman collection) with similar grid divisions indicate that the subjects of *Broadway Boogie Woogie* and the *New York City* series are related and were evolved from several works preserving the generally open block in the centre of the composition (S: c.c. 419, 420; see also c.c. 430 for another intermediate stage). In fact, the two drawings exhibited here have indications of small unbounded colour bars which relate specifically to those that Mondrian added *circa* 1940-41 to several earlier canvases (S: c.c. 415 and 418-20).

111b

Study II for Broadway Boogie Woogie

1942

Charcoal on paper

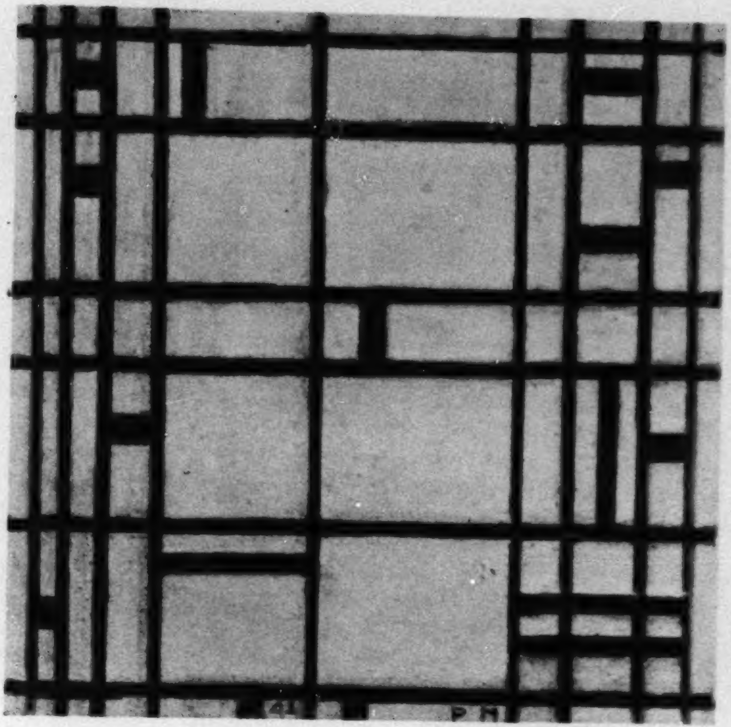
9 x 9 in., 22.8 x 22.8 cm.

Signed lower centre: 42 PM

Provenance: given to the present owner by the artist 1942

Exhibitions: Santa Barbara 1965, no. 71; Dallas 1965(?); Washington 1965, no. 55

Mr and Mrs Arnold Newman

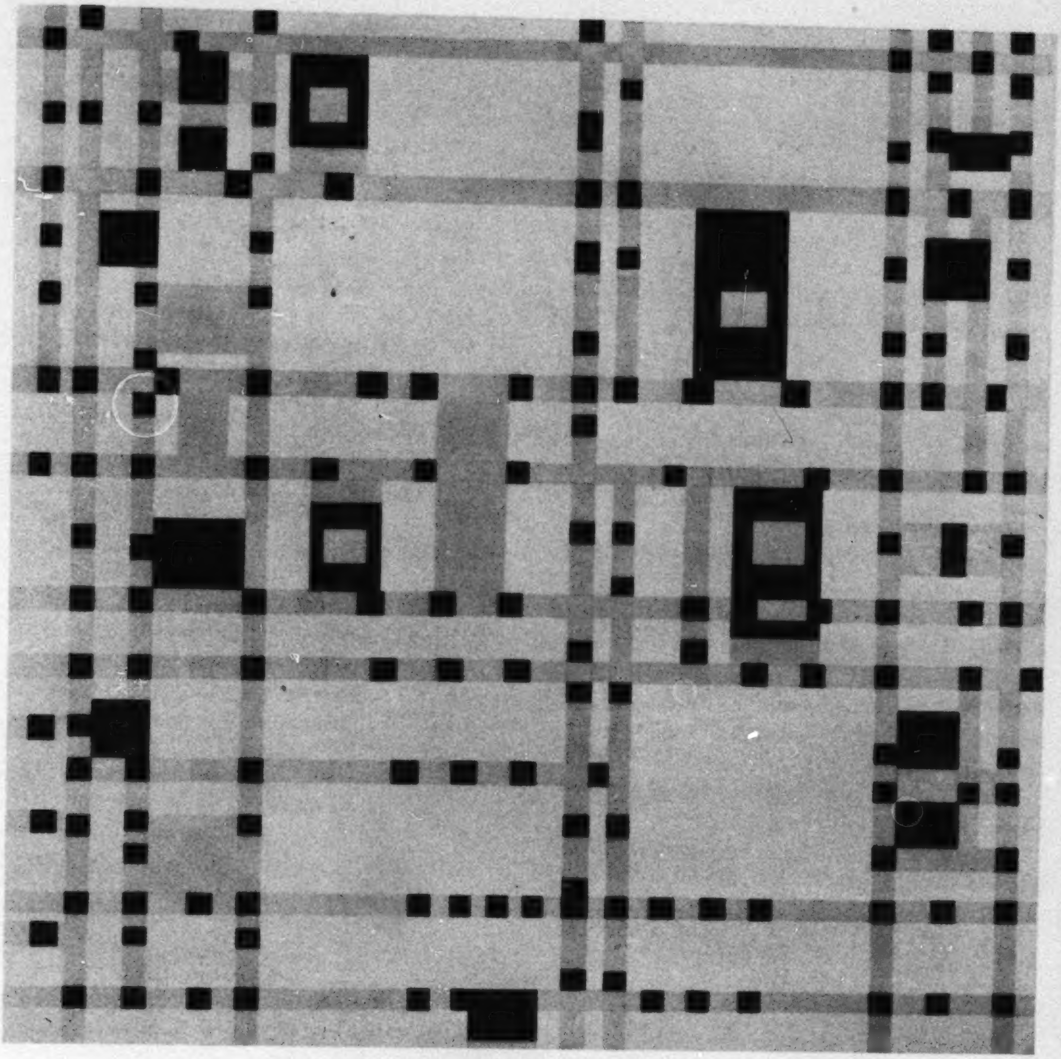


112 Broadway Boogie Woogie

The most striking feature of this monumental late work is the new use of colour blocks, which had been freed from their black line encasements by 1942. With one inconclusive and minor exception (a small detail of no. 113b), no known drawing relating to *Broadway Boogie Woogie* places one colour plane within another; one may assume that this was introduced only during the actual execution of the painting. The two clearly related drawings from the Newman collection (nos. 111a and b) use unbounded colour planes merely as intermediary bars to emphasize or redirect implied movement within the large grid rather than to contrast radically with it. Thus the basic composition of *Broadway Boogie Woogie* is little different in character from *New York City I* (no. 110) or the Newman drawings.

If *Broadway Boogie Woogie* is not essentially a composition produced with colour squares, these squares are nonetheless expressively important as secondary punctuations of the basic grid. As in the "checkerboard" paintings of 1919 (see no. 87), Mondrian has sometimes painted different colours over the original ones. Yellow dominates *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, since yellow lines, segments and squares cover the greatest surface area except for the white ground, and the grid is made up exclusively of yellow lines. The intermediate grey, which is introduced as squares or near-squares along the lines and, more remarkably, as areas within larger colour areas, acts not merely as a background complement but as an entity equal to the primaries, red and blue. Admittedly it often functions chiefly to prevent disturbing juxtapositions of primary colours. Nevertheless, by alternating grey and coloured squares, Mondrian acknowledges and transforms the flickering grey spots which form an optical illusion in the grid works of 1918-19 (e.g. no. 85) and the late 1930's (e.g. S: c.c. 397). In this respect, *New York City I* must be seen as the necessary predecessor of *Broadway Boogie Woogie* in its multiple interlacing of lines to produce staccato rhythmic effects where lines of different colours cross.

A valid analogy may be drawn between *Broadway Boogie Woogie* and the colours of Broadway's neon advertising signs (muted in 1943). The most basic analogy is no doubt with the music of great Negro boogie woogie pianists like Jim Yancey, Albert Ammons and Mead "Lux" Lewis, whose phonograph records Mondrian listened to closely, and whom he occasionally heard in person in Harlem, accompanied by his friend Harry Holtzman. *Broadway Boogie Woogie* does not exhibit precise structural analogies with the modified blues form of boogie woogie music, such as the "eight to the bar" rhythm or the tripartite divisions of a twelve bar chorus, i.e. A-A'-B (melodic) or A-B-A' (harmonic). The essential musical aspect of the painting is expressed solely in visual metaphors which evoke the syncopated rhythms of jazz. This work demands to be appreciated as an experience in time, as well as in space, since even after careful viewing the image does not coalesce into a timeless and static entity. The viewer must stand before the painting for some time, with the receptive attitude of the concert-goer or jazz fan, before its extremely complex pictorial character begins to involve him in the pulsating sensations suggested by the title.



1942-43

Oil on canvas

50 x 50 in., 127 x 127 cm.

Signed lower left: PM

Dated lower right: $\frac{42}{43}$

Provenance: in 1943 *via* Valentine Gallery to present owner

Exhibitions:

New York 1943;

New York 1945, no. 48;

Amsterdam 1946, no. 121;

Basel 1947, no. 2;

Zürich 1955, no. 118;

Rome 1956-57, no. 54;

Paris 1957, no. 22;

New York 1960, no. 38

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Together with several other pencil or crayon sketches apparently done in New York (Holtzman collection), these studies were executed on lined school paper. Perhaps Mondrian used this paper for practical reasons similar to those which prompted the use of coloured tape; it gave him greater freedom in altering his grid design on an easily measured ground. The placement of crosses and squares in these two works appears extremely random when compared with drawings (nos. 111a and b) related to *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (no. 112). In fact, which edge was meant to be the top is open to question, and in this catalogue the lines of the paper have been placed on a horizontal axis by analogy to other drawings on similar paper, rather than from a conviction that this is the definitive solution. It is known that Mondrian executed his New York paintings by placing them horizontally on a flat table; he may have decided the question of top and bottom only at an advanced stage of execution. All major New York works show a tendency towards greater equivalence between vertical and horizontal elements. The uniformly square format and multiple line crossings of the *New York City* series (e.g. nos. 109 and 110), *Broadway Boogie Woogie* and *Victory Boogie Woogie* (S: ill. p. 191, c.c. 425) suggest that Mondrian had moved further than at any time since 1918-19 from a classical sense of pictorial gravity in which horizontal lines are still metaphorically related to the natural horizon.

A second hypothesis is that these drawings do not relate exclusively or perhaps even chiefly to *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, but that their structure leads towards *Victory Boogie Woogie* instead. *Study I: Boogie Woogie* includes indications of vertical and horizontal lines, perhaps more in keeping with the regular grid of *Broadway Boogie Woogie* than the complex linear patterns of *Victory Boogie Woogie*. But the dispersion of squares, rectangles and crosses (the latter, as in all Mondrian's drawings done during the abstract period, e.g. no. 92, refer to areas of colour or intermediate grey) seems closer to the style and structural arrangement of *Victory Boogie Woogie*. In both drawings, but especially in *Study II: Boogie Woogie*, the design is oriented partly around a lozenge form. Neither is close in structure to the drawing (no. 114) most specifically executed for *Victory Boogie Woogie*, but both nonetheless lead to an understanding of Mondrian's evolution of the final painting. In spirit they are at least as close to it as to the charcoal drawings preceding *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (nos. 111a and b).

The difficulty in establishing the chronology of the drawings may reflect an ambiguity that was part of Mondrian's thinking during the New York period, as during the transition to abstraction in 1916-17 (see nos. 81 and 82). For Mondrian the selection of a square, rectangular, or lozenge format was less fundamental than the search to evolve a new equivalence between the vertical and horizontal cosmic polarity, which he continued to consider the essential problem of plastic expression.

113a

Study I: Boogie Woogie

1943

Pencil on lined paper

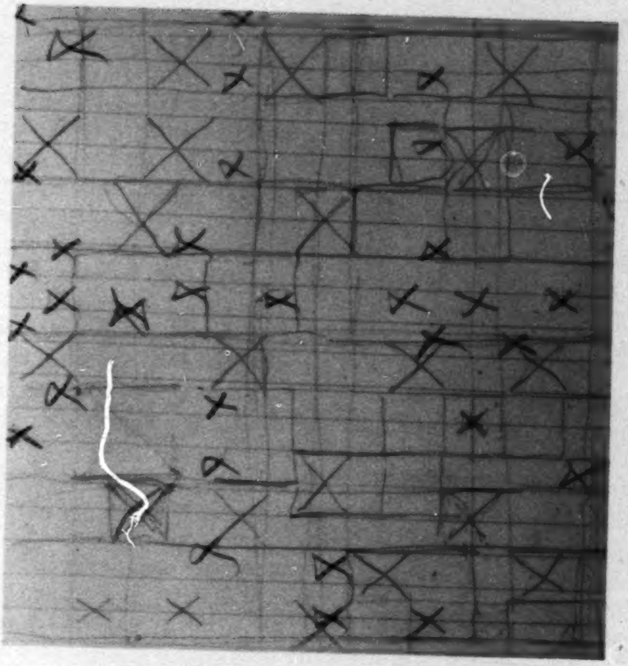
7-3/4 x 7-3/4 in., 19.7 x 19.7 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: Mondrian estate to Harry Holtzman; to present owner 1958

Exhibitions: New York 1963, no. 48

Sidney Janis Gallery



113b

Study II: Boogie Woogie

1943

Pencil on lined paper

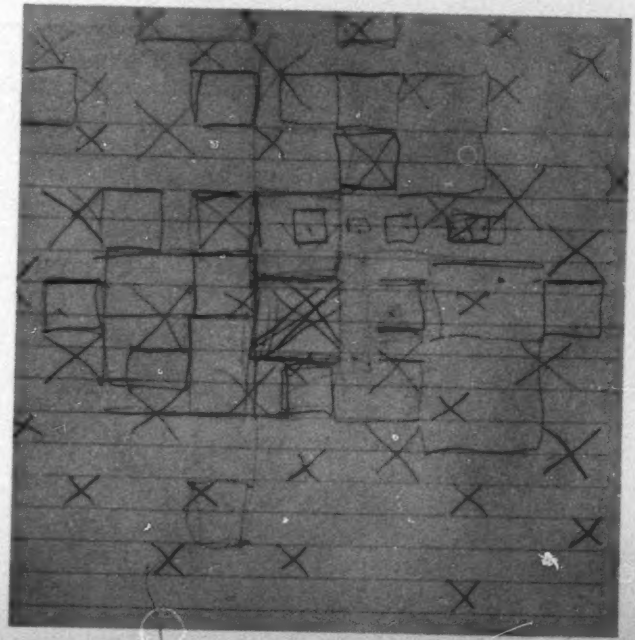
7-3/4 x 7-3/4 in., 19.7 x 19.7 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: Mondrian estate to Harry Holtzman; to present owner 1958

Exhibitions: New York 1963, no. 47

Sidney Janis Gallery



114 Study for Victory Boogie Woogie

There can be no doubt that this drawing relates directly to Mondrian's final major painting, *Victory Boogie Woogie* (S: ill. p. 191, c.c. 425), although scarcely a line, square or cross can be related to a specific counterpart in the painting. Mondrian's working method at the time, which included a constant development of the composition and colour, is chiefly responsible for this dissimilarity. A photograph exists which shows Mondrian using coloured tape as a guide in laying out lines of colour on the painting, but only several horizontals and one or two verticals in the painting, as it now exists, are straight continuous lines. In this study, any distinction between line and plane has been radically confused, as was also apparent in two transitional *Boogie Woogie* drawings (nos. 113a and b). In this drawing, Mondrian seems to return to concepts of space and design characteristic of the 1915-19 period, when an implied rhythmic movement of plastic elements, creating lateral tensions within a shallow space, activated an otherwise stable structure (nos. 80 to 87). Here, the element of movement, which Mondrian called "dynamic rhythm" (Sweeney p. 16), becomes more important than the creation of a classical structural equilibrium.

A close compositional relationship between this drawing and the large painting is more easily discovered if one assumes that some of what appear to be squares within squares in the drawing were changed in the painting into white areas (e.g. the large square area in the middle of the upper half of the composition). In other areas, such as that to the right of the large white area in the centre of the lower half of the composition, which Mondrian likely executed or changed shortly before his death, the blocks of white are integrated into a checkerboard pattern with small blocks of red, blue, yellow and grey. Here Mondrian may have finally decided that a white plane was no longer needed as a background. Several white squares were included within larger grey grounds, as several grey squares had been included within colour blocks in *Broadway Boogie Woogie* (no. 112). In *Victory Boogie Woogie* such polarities of plastic means as line versus plane and colour versus non-colour are further dissolved. In his final synthesis of the contrasting polarities of Neo-Plastic design, Mondrian experiments with a solution which contains, in its complex juxtapositions of line, colour, space and movement, seeds of more recent abstract art.

1943

Pencil on light buff paper

Diagonal dimension:

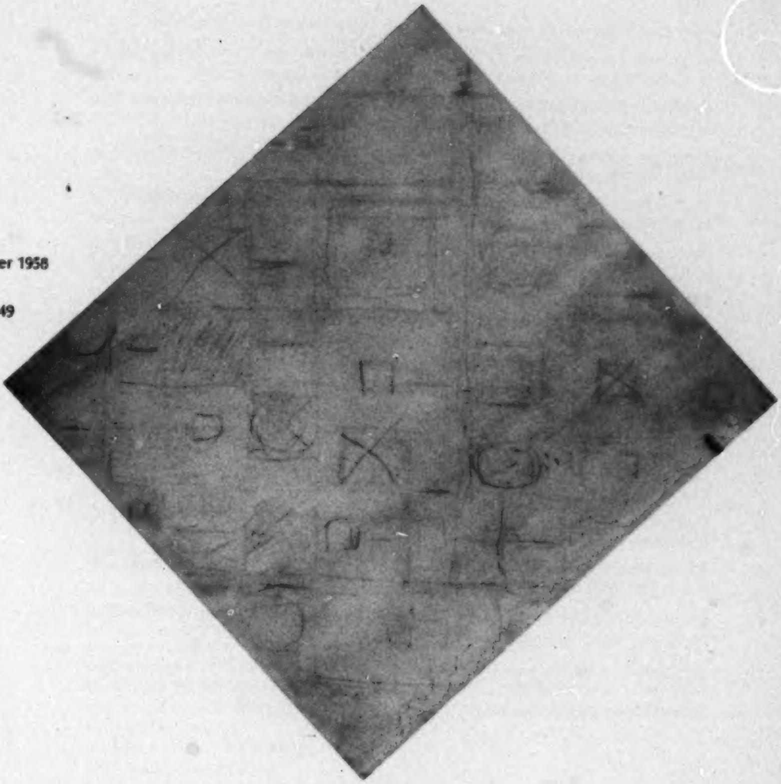
19-1/8 in., 48.5 cm.

Not signed or dated

Provenance: Mondrian estate to
Harry Holtzman; to present owner 1958

Exhibitions: New York 1963, no. 49

Sidney Janis Gallery



List of Documents

1 Birth Certificate: Extract of 23 April 1911 from the city records of Amersfoort.

2 Qualification Certificate to teach drawing in the Netherlands at the Primary School level; No. 2963/s. Examination held October. Dated 11 December 1889.

3 Qualification Certificate to teach drawing and perspective in the Netherlands at the Secondary School level. Granted 10 September 1892.

4 Certificate of Good Behaviour from the City of Winterswijk for the period April 13, 1880 — October 24, 1892.

5 Registration as Member of Dutch Theosophic Organization #1690; signed May 25, 1909 by Anne Besant.

6 Letter dated 30 January 1912 from Bureau of City Records of Amersfoort to Mondrian in Amsterdam (in answer to Mondrian's letter of 28 January requesting his hour of birth).

7 Extract of Registration for Aliens in Paris: Prefecture of Police 1^e Division 4^e Bureau: Residence listed as 26, rue du Départ and date of arrival as May; dated 11 May 1912.

8 Authorization for Mondrian to make copies at the Louvre (No. 3747, valid 1912), dated June, 1912.

9 Letter to Lodewijk Schelfhout dated 12 June 1914, mentioning Mondrian's plan to be in the Netherlands "in August".

10 "Exercise in Style #8 (1916)" by Jacob van Domselaer published in the *Journaal van den Nieuwe Kring I*: 14.

11 Dutch Passport 432517. Dated 13 September 1928 (renewed on 27 July 1940 until 13 September 1942).

12 French Visa. Registers move to 278 boul. Raspail 20 March 1936 and departure from Paris *XXV*^{e} for London, 19 September 1938.

13 British National Registration #692155. Signed P. Mondriaan 22 May 1940. Address: 60 Parkhill Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.

14 Declaration of Intention to become U.S. Citizen 22 September 1941. Date of arrival in America listed as 3 October 1940; Residence 353 E. 56th St., N.Y.; 5' 8" and 138 lbs. Signed: Pieter (Piet) Mondrian.

Cross-References

Following is a cross-reference between this catalogue and the list of all known works published in Michel Seuphor, *Piet Mondrian: Life and Work*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1956, pp. 409-432.

no. 6: S.3 / no. 11: S. 16 / no. 14: S.81 or 82 / no. 15: S.227 / no. 17: S.157(?) / no. 20: S.119(?) / no. 24: S.47 / no. 29: S.216 / no. 30: S.22 / no. 34: S.50 / no. 36: S.193 / no. 39: S.28 / no. 40: S.207, see also S.29 / no. 44: S.608 (revised French edition) / no. 45a: S.262 / no. 45b: S.199 / no. 46: S.180 / no. 47: S.275 / no. 48: S.185(?) / no. 50a: S.287 / no. 50b: S.288 / no. 51: S.192 / no. 52: S.246 / no. 53: S.325 / no. 54: S.283 / no. 57: S. 321 / no. 59: S.293 / no. 61: S.307 / no. 62a: S.247 / no. 62b: S.266 / no. 63: S.365 / no. 64: S.344 / no. 65: S.364 / no. 66: S.335 / no. 67: S.347 / no. 69: S.329 / no. 70: S. 373 / no. 71: S.411 / no. 73: S.412 / no. 74: S.372 / no. 75: S.407 / no. 77: S. 362 / no. 78: S.388 / no. 79a: S.415 / no. 79b: S.397 / no. 80: S.424 / no. 81: S.389 / no. 82: S.433 / no. 83: S.428 / no. 84: S.441 / no. 85: S.438 / no. 86a: S.437 / no. 86b: S.446 / no. 87: S.442 / no. 88: S.452 / no. 89: S.468 / no. 90: S.456 / no. 91: S.460 / no. 93: S.469 / no. 94: S.485 / no. 96: S.494 / no. 98: S.503 / no. 99: S.510 / no. 100: S.521 / no. 101: S.537 / no. 102: S.540 / no. 103: S.551 / no. 104: S.558 / no. 105: S.560 / no. 106: S.569 / no. 107: S.544 / no. 110: S.587 / no. 111b: S.589 / no. 112: S.590 / no. 114: S.591

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1 Photograph: Drydock at Durgerdam
Courtesy Topografische Atlas Gemeente Archiefdienst, Amsterdam
2 CANAL BRIDGE, crayon
Private collection, The Hague
Courtesy Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague
3 REFORMED CHURCH AT WINTERSWIJK, gouache
Private collection, Amsterdam
4 Photograph: The Royal Wax Candle Factory along the Ruysdaelkade, Amsterdam (destroyed 1907)
Courtesy Topografische Atlas Gemeente Archiefdienst, Amsterdam
5 LANDSCAPE WITH BOAT, oil sketch
Gallery Valentien, Stuttgart
6 Photograph: Grove of Pollard Willows along the Gein
7 WINDMILL, oil sketch
E. V. Thaw & Co., Inc.
8 TREES ALONG THE GEIN, charcoal
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13 DYING CHRYSANTHEMUM, charcoal
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Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery
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23 Photograph: Notre Dame des Champs, Boulevard Montparnasse, Paris
24 TABLEAU I, oil
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29 STUDY RELATED TO COMPOSITION LONDON, charcoal on cardboard
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30 STUDY RELATED TO NEW YORK CITY SERIES, charcoal
Harry Holtzman collection

List of Abbreviations

EXHIBITIONS

Amsterdam 1898: *Arti et Amicitiae*, annual drawing exhibition, May. (It should be noted that drawings in Dutch include water colours.)
Amsterdam 1901: *St. Lucas*, 11th annual exhibition, June 8 to July 15.
Amsterdam 1903: *Exhibition of Works of Art by Living Masters*, Stedelijk Museum, September.
Amsterdam 1904, *St. Lucas*: *St. Lucas*, 14th annual exhibition, May 8 to June 15.
Amsterdam 1904, *Arti*: *Arti et Amicitiae*, annual drawing exhibition, November/December (second part).
Amsterdam 1907, *Arti*: *Arti et Amicitiae*, Works of Art, April/May.
Amsterdam 1907, *St. Lucas*: *St. Lucas*, 17th annual exhibition, April 1 to May 15.
Amsterdam 1909, Stedelijk: *Spoor Piet Mondriaan en Jan Sluyters*, Stedelijk Museum, January 6 through 31.
Amsterdam 1909, *St. Lucas*: 19th annual exhibition, April 11 to May 16.
Amsterdam 1909, *Arti*: drawing and sculpture exhibition, October/November.
Amsterdam 1910: *St. Lucas*, 20th annual exhibition, April 24 to beginning of June.
Amsterdam 1911: *Moderne Kunstkring*, Rijksmuseum, October 6 to November 5.
Amsterdam 1912: *Moderne Kunstkring*, Stedelijk Museum, October 6 to November 7.
Amsterdam 1913: *Moderne Kunstkring*, Stedelijk Museum, November 7 to December 8.
Amsterdam 1915: *Schellhout, Mondriaan, Sluyters, Gestel, Le Fauconnier and van Epen*, Stedelijk Museum, October 3 through 25.
Amsterdam 1917: *Hollandsche Kunstenaarskring*, Stedelijk Museum, May 5 through 28.
Amsterdam 1922: *Retrospective Exhibition of Works by Piet Mondriaan: on the Occasion of his Fiftieth Birthday*, Stedelijk Museum, March 4 to April 2.
*Amsterdam 1946: *Piet Mondrian Retrospective Exhibition*, Stedelijk Museum, November/December.
*Amsterdam 1951: *De Stijl*, Stedelijk Museum, July 6 to September 25.
Basel 1947: *Piet Mondrian Retrospective Exhibition*, Kunsthalle, February 6 to March 2.
*Basel 1964-65: *Piet Mondrian*, Gallery Beyeler, November/January.
Brussels 1909: *Doe Stil Voort*, Musée Moderne, July 10 to August 1.
Dallas 1965: *Piet Mondrian*, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, March/April.
Domburg 1912: *Exhibition of Paintings*, July/August.
*Dortmund 1964: *De Stijl*, Museum am Ostwall, May/June.
Dresden 1925: Kühl and Kühn Gallery (apparently a one-man exhibition).
Dresden 1926: *International Exhibition of Art*, June/September.
*The Hague 1955: *Mondriaan*, Gemeetemuseum, February 10 to April 12.
*London 1955: *Piet Mondriaan 1872-1944*, The Whitechapel Art Gallery, August/September.
New York 1940: *A.E. Gallatin Collection*, Museum of Living Art, New York University.
New York 1942: *Piet Mondrian*, Valentine-Dudensing Gallery, January/February.
New York 1943: *Piet Mondrian*, Valentine-Dudensing Gallery, March/April.
New York 1945: *Piet Mondrian Retrospective Exhibition*, The Museum of Modern Art, March/May.
New York 1946: *Mondrian Paintings*, Valentine-Dudensing Gallery, March 4 through 23.
New York 1949: *Piet Mondrian*, Sidney Janis Gallery, October 10 to November 12.
New York 1951: *Piet Mondrian*, Sidney Janis Gallery, February 5 to March 17.
New York 1953: *Fifty Years of Piet Mondrian*, Sidney Janis Gallery, November 2 through 30.
New York 1957: *Piet Mondrian*, Sidney Janis Gallery, September 30 to November 2.
*New York 1957-58: *Piet Mondrian: The Earlier Years*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, December 18(?) to January 19.
New York 1960: *Arp and Mondrian*, Sidney Janis Gallery, January 25 to March 5.
New York 1962: *Piet Mondrian*, Sidney Janis Gallery, January 2 to February 4.
New York 1963: *Mondrian*, Sidney Janis Gallery, November 4 through 30.
*New York 1964, Frumkin: *Piet Mondrian: The Early Years: 1905-1908*, Allan Frumkin Gallery, April 27 to May 23.
*New York 1964, Marlborough: *Mondrian De Stijl and Their Impact*, Marlborough-Gerson Gallery Inc., April.

Paris 1911: *Salon des Independents, 27^{e} Exposition*, April 21 to June 13.

Paris 1957, René: *Mondrian*, Galerie Denise René, March 8 to April 7.

Paris 1957, Cordier: *Piet Mondrian oeuvre figuratives de collections parisien*, Galerie Daniel Cordier, March 12 through 31.

Paris 1960-61: *Les Sources du XX^{e} Siecle*, Musée National d'Art Moderne, November 4 to January 23.

Rome 1956-57: *Piet Mondrian*, *Roma*. Galleria Nazionale d'arte moderna — Milano. Palazzo Reale, November/February.

Rotterdam 1915: *P. Alma, H. Le Fauconnier, P. Mondrian*, Rotterdamsche Kunstkring, January 31 to February 28.

***Santa Barbara 1965:** *Piet Mondrian*, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, January 9 to February 21.

Utrecht 1892: *Kunstliefde*, Tentoonstelling van Schilderijen, April 17 to May 1.

Utrecht 1893: *Kunstliefde*, Tentoonstelling van Schilderijen, April 16 through 30.

Venice 1956: *XXVIII Biennale di Venezia*, summer.

Washington 1965: *Piet Mondrian*, Washington Gallery of Modern Art, May 8 to June 20.

***Zürich 1955:** *Piet Mondrian*, Kunsthaus, May 22 to beginning of July.

OTHER THAN EXHIBITIONS

Blok: Cornelis Blok, "Mondriaan's Vroege Werk", *Museumjournaal voor Moderne Kunst*, August 1962, Series 8, no. 2, pp. 33-41 (resumés français, p. 46).

GM: *Mondriaan in de collectie van het Haags Gemeentemuseum/catalogus*, 1964, (catalogue by Cornelis Blok).

Hammacher: A. M. Hammacher, *Eduard Karsen en zijn Vader Kaspar*, The Hague: D. A. Daamins, 1947.

Herbert: Robert L. Herbert, *Barbizon Revisited* (catalogue), San Francisco, September 27 to November 4, 1962.

James: Martin S. James, "Mondrian and the Dutch Symbolists", *The Art Journal* XXIII: no. 2 (winter 1963-64), pp. 103-111.

K-M: *Catalogus van Schilderijen uit de XIXde en XXste eeuw*, Rijksmuseum Krœller-Müller, Otterlo, 1956.

Lurasco: F. M. Lurasco, *Onze Moderne Meesters*, Amsterdam: C. L. G. Veldt, 1907.

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MONDRIAN / CORRECTIONS TO THE CATALOGUE

p1/Philadelphia Museum of Art, *read* April 1 *instead of* April 8

p2/1st column, 8th line, *read* Jonkheer *instead of* Jongherr

p5/The Catalogue, *read* Diagonal dimensions indicate the length from point to point. *instead of* Diagonal dimensions indicate the length of each edge of the canvas.

p6/1892, *read* Doetinchem *instead of* Doelinchem

p6/1905-08, *read* Albert Hulshoff Pol *instead of* Albert Hulshtoff Pol

p26/no. 2 signature, *read PCM. 18*$\frac{18}{10}$*90. instead of PCM 18*$\frac{18}{10}$*90*

p30/no. 5 signature, *read PCM. '92. instead of PCM '92*

p31/no. 6 signature, *read* P. C. MONDRIAAN. Jr. 1/93. *instead of* P. C. MONDRIAAN Jr. 1/93

p60/no. 24, 9th line, *read Grazende Kalfjes instead of Grazend Kalfjes*

p100/no. 49, 26th line, *read* in effects of outdoor lighting, incipiently unmixed colour and free brush technique *instead of* in effects of outdoor lighting and incipiently Pointillist colour and brush technique

p123/no. 61, 11th line, *read schaduwkanten instead of shadeuwkanten*

p160/no. 80, 10th line, *read Composition in Black and White instead of Composition with Lines*

p166/no. 84, 3rd line, *read* 86a and b *instead of* 86

p168/no. 85, 4th line, *read Composition in Black and White instead of Composition in Line*

p180/no. 91, dimensions, *read* 44-5/8 in. *instead of* 40-3/4 in. and *read* 113.3 cm. *instead of* 103.5 cm.

p187/no. 94 Diagonal dimension, *read* 56-1/4 in., 142.8 cm. *instead of* 40in., 101.5 cm.

p191/no. 97, 7th line, *read* 362, 363, 365, 366 *instead of* 362-66

p198/no. 101, 13th line, *read* sides of the canvas *instead of* diagonal dimension of the canvas

p202/no. 103, 2nd line from bottom, *read Composition 2 with Blue Square instead of Composition 2 with Blue*

p208/no. 106, 1st line, *read* This composition is apparently *instead of* This composition is virtually

p216/no. 110, 18th line, *read* several blue and red bands, seems to dominate the composition. *instead of* many lines, seems to exist behind the more aggressive bands of blue or red.

p226/list of documents, no. 5, *read* Annie Besant *instead of* Anne Besant

p230/Mondrian and Related Movements, 4th line, *read* J. M. Meulenhoff *instead of* J. M. Menleuhoff